Commentary

Volume Fifty-three, Number Three, March 1972

He Said She Said

Leslie H. Farber

Is Busing Necessary? Nathan Glazer

On Becoming a Jew
Herbert Gold

The New Pluralists
Harold R. Isaacs

R.S.V.P.--a Story
Robert Nozick

The Sorrows of American-Jewish Poetry
Harold Bloom

Peckinpah & Kubrick: Fire & Ice
William S. Pechter

School Integration and Liberal Opinion
Norman Podhoretz

BOOKS IN REVIEW
R. J. Herrnstein
David Herbert Donald
John P. Sisk
David Ernest Haight

An Exchange on ACLU
Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. & Critics

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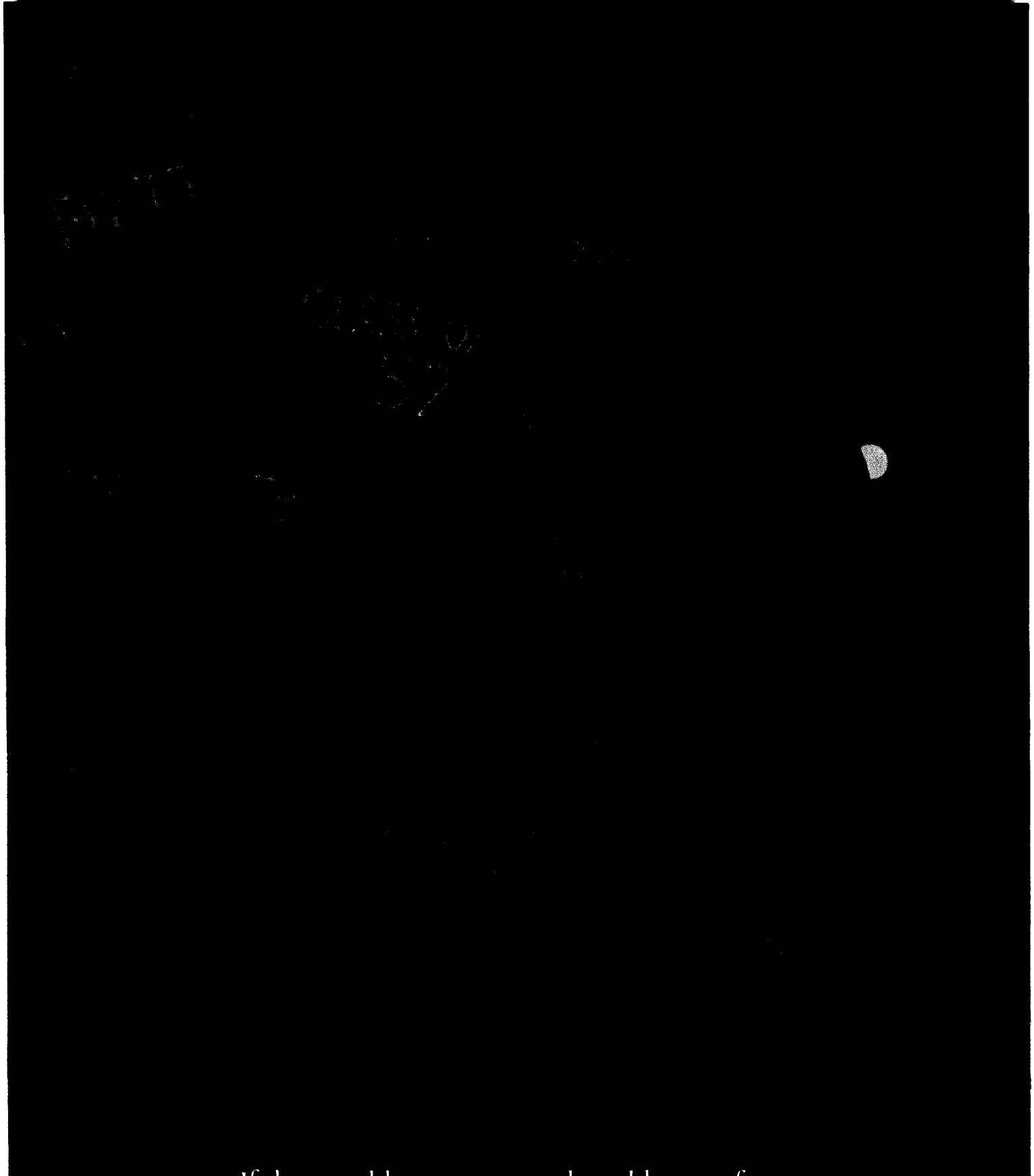

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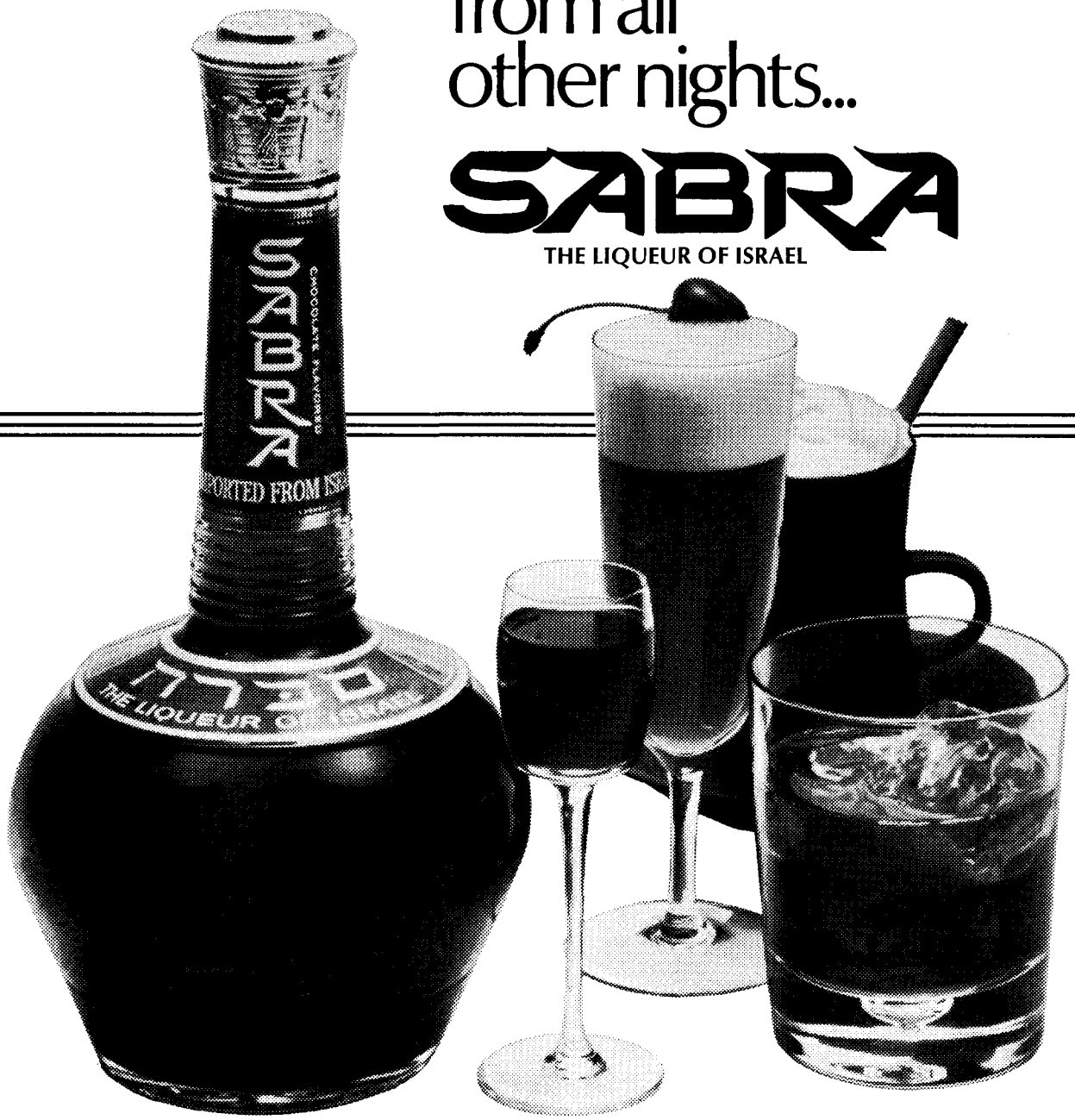

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School Integration & Liberal Opinion

Norman Podhoretz

If Nathan Glazer (p. 39) is right —and I find his arguments entirely convincing—no benefit will accrue to anyone, whether white or black, from the requirement now apparently being established by the courts that no American public school shall have a black majority and that the student population of every school shall be racially balanced as far as possible in accordance with a specified mix. It used to be thought that the academic performance of black children would improve in integrated schools, but there is, as Mr. Glazer demonstrates, no evidence to confirm this idea. What the evidence actually suggests is that integration has little or no effect on academic performance, neither helping the blacks, as so many had hoped, nor hurting the whites, as so many had feared.

It also used to be thought that relations between the races would improve as a result of school integration, but here the evidence is if anything less encouraging than in the case of academic performance. I myself attended integrated schools as a child, and nearly ten years ago, I attempted in an essay called "My Negro Problem—and Ours" to show that such schools bore not the slightest resemblance to the rosy fantasies being scattered about in those days by the prevailing winds of liberal opinion. Liberal opinion said that sending white children and black children to school together would lead to greater mutual understanding and respect; I said that in my own experience it had led to violence and greater animosity. The studies Mr. Glazer cites of integrated schools of more recent vintage tend to prove that the experience of the integrated schools of the 30's and 40's was a more reliable guide to the future than the generous expectations of liberal opinion. At best relations between the races continue to remain cool in integrated schools, and often enough they are exacerbated to an intolerable, and to me altogether familiar, degree.

If, then, no good is likely to come of it, why should we persist in forcibly integrating the schools? The question becomes even more difficult to answer when we consider how vast, even among liberals and even among blacks, the opposition has grown to the measures which must now be adopted if school integration is to proceed —measures which have found their definitive political summation in the great symbol of busing. In effect the country is being ordered against its own wishes to undergo a major reorganization without being given a reasonable assurance that some good will thereby be served, either immediate or ultimate, short-run or long. But if it is all to be for nothing, and if no one wants to do it, why should it be done at all?

Because, answer the activists and the bureaucrats and the lawyers and the judges, it is the law and the law must be obeyed. And indeed they are right, the law must be obeyed—if indeed it *is* the law that racial concentrations in the schools may not exist even if they arise from causes other than legal measures designed to bring them about. We already know for certain that legally sanctioned (or *"de jure"*) segregation of any kind, overt or covert, in the schools and out, is against the law of the land. No one any longer questions this, not even in the South. But until the Supreme Court settles the issues involved in busing and redistricting, we will not know for certain whether *"de facto"* separation in the schools is also against the law of the land. And even then, if the Supreme Court should declare that it is, given the huge numbers of people who do not agree, redress from what they may decide is judicial tyranny parading as constitutional warrant is likely to be sought in legislative action and perhaps in constitutional amendment.

Hopefully it will never come to that. Hopefully in the end the country will avert the major constitutional crisis which seems to threaten it now. Hopefully good sense will prevail—the good sense which leads so many people, often uneasily because they are liberals and well-intentioned and influenced by an irrational dogma, to wonder nevertheless why a specified racial balance must be imposed on the schools at such great cost in money and bitterness and anxiety when the strongest of probabilities is that doing so will neither overcome educational deficiency nor enhance the relations of the races. ■

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In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

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Letters from Readers

ACLU

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Last spring Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. ["Politics & ACLU," December 1971] contacted ACLU to ask for specific materials for use in preparing an article on ACLU for COMMENTARY. The choice of Mr. Bishop to write such an article seemed odd, roughly comparable to asking Strom Thurmond to do a piece on the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Mr. Bishop has made something of a career of opposing ACLU. For those readers who have not followed his activities (there is no reason why they should), I cite just one example. In May 1970, Mr. Bishop testified before the House Internal Security Committee in favor of retaining the emergency-detention provisions of the McCarran Act. This remnant of the McCarthy era had by then become repugnant even to such "civil libertarians" as President Nixon. At the President's urging, it has since been overwhelmingly repealed by Congress.

Nevertheless, we sent Mr. Bishop exactly the materials he requested and, at the same time, suggested to him that since they did not provide a representative picture of ACLU's work, he might like to come in and talk to me. He disdained the invitation, apparently preferring to proceed on the basis of his opinions, unqualified by any information he might have gleaned from talking to the ACLU staff. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that his article is filled with factual errors and distortions.

The following list touches some of the more serious mistakes in order of their appearance in the Bishop article, leaving aside both petty errors (including such simple matters as ACLU's age and size) and interpretations that are even arguably supportable. (I would also like to comment on Norman Podhoretz's broadside on ACLU in the same issue of COMMENTARY ["Liberty & the Liberals"], but find it impossible to do so—it is devoid of factual assertions and, indeed, its conclusions have no discernible foundation in reality. However, I would like to express my congratulations to Mr. Podhoretz that he has all the freedom he wants and needs. Would that we all could be content.)

1) Mr. Bishop says our lawyers actively litigate about 100 major cases a year. We are involved currently in approximately 2,200 cases.

2) Mr. Bishop dismisses as radical rhetoric ACLU's frequent charge of official harassment of the radical press. A thorough review of our 2,200 cases is impossible, but consider, for example, these few recent cases, randomly selected:

a. A federal judge in Washington, D.C. last summer struck down a federal regulation under which street vendors of underground papers were being arrested, warned that metropolitan police regulations forbade harassment of the vendors, and suggested that underground newspaper reporters arrested at demonstrations file false-arrest suits against the police.

b. The editor of a Wisconsin underground paper was given a six-month jail sentence for refusing to reveal confidential news sources to a county grand jury in the absence of a showing of compelling need by the government—the standard for the subpoenaing of newsmen as stated by both the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the U.S. Department of Justice.

c. A federal judge in Texas rejected a school board's claim that it had the right to suppress an underground school newspaper because there was an organized student movement attempting to overthrow the Houston school system, and elimination of the paper was necessary to prevent further "infiltration"!

d. A Richmond underground paper won press passes after a federal court ruled the police could not limit issuance of passes to papers "which show proper respect for the United States and the high ideals for which it stands."

3) Mr. Bishop refers to "the bitter and continuing row within the New York Civil Liberties Union over 'community control.'" He correctly states that this is a "paradigm"—for it is largely a fiction. It exists to the extent that those who are still fighting the battle continue occasionally to issue statements of dubious accuracy about the issue and regularly to run candidates for election to the NYCLU Board of Directors, which is elected by the organization's

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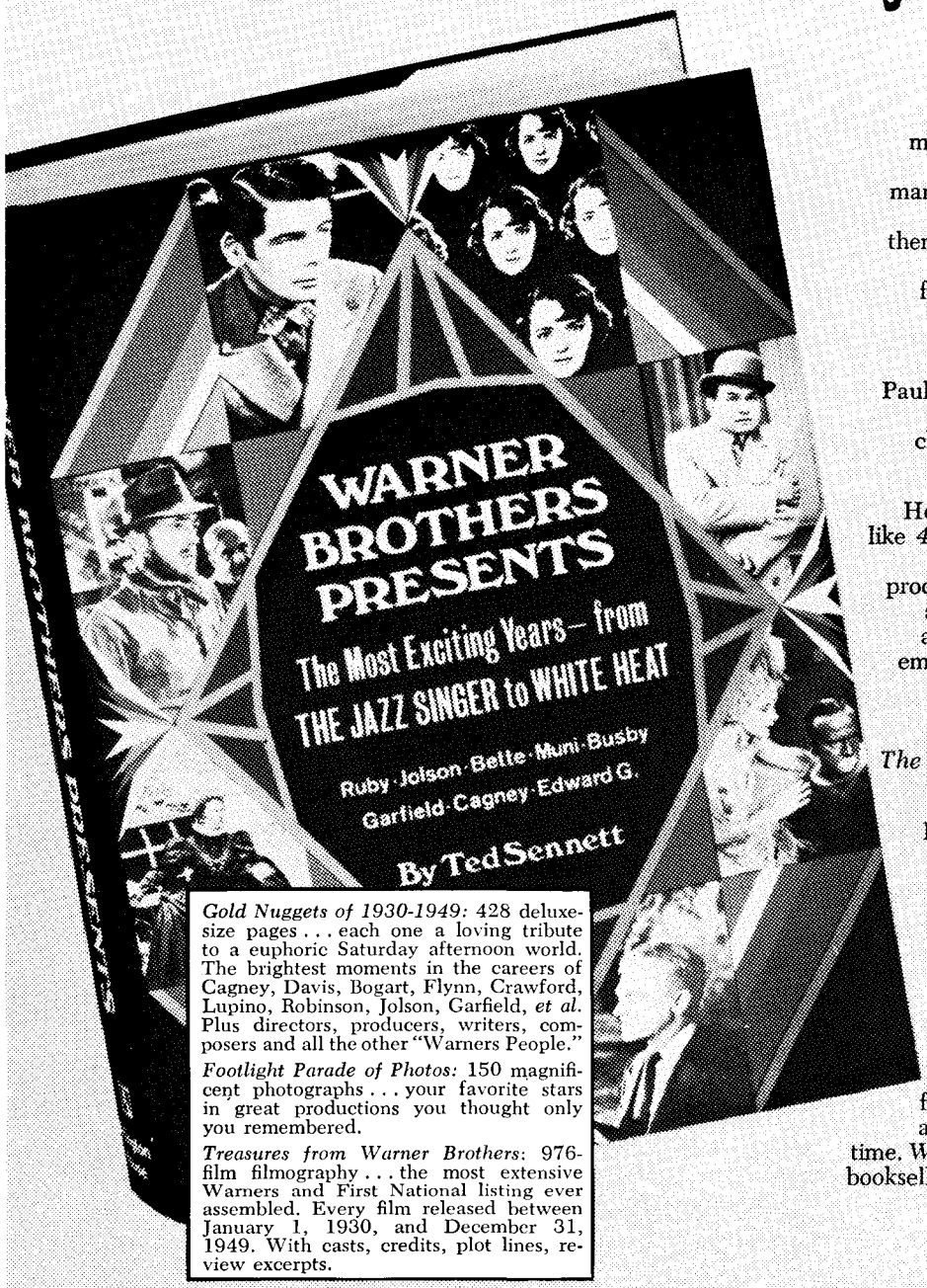
Look Back with Love at Yesterday's Great Movies.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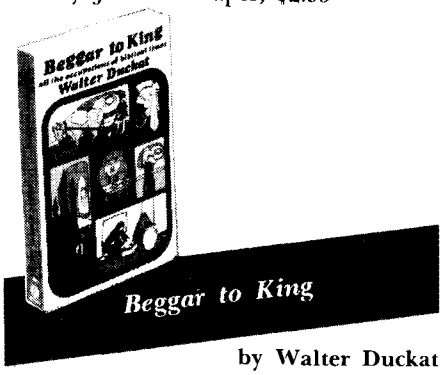

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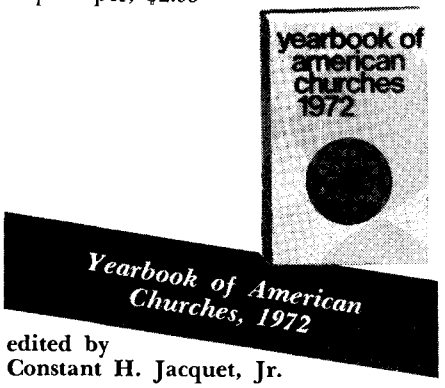

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membership. They have run slates for the past three years. They have won no seats and they have lost by 2-to-1 votes in all three elections.

4) The basic issue the dissidents harped on in the community-control dispute was due process for teachers. Mr. Bishop states NYCLU took "the wrong side" on that issue. In fact, quite early in the controversy, on August 28, 1968, NYCLU issued a statement, by means of public testimony, demanding full due process for the teachers, and it never deviated from that position. (Earlier that summer NYCLU had circulated a statement of this position to other organizations and offered to support the dismissed teachers in litigation.) NYCLU insisted, however, that other civil-liberties factors were involved in the dispute and these merited the same determined protection as due process, a position the dissidents disdained and distorted.

5) Mr. Bishop asserts that the same "hostility between 'activists' and 'traditionalists' is still intense" in ACLU. This is simply false. It is a rare issue these days on which a Board vote splits along "activist-traditionalist" lines.

6) Mr. Bishop correctly states that the ACLU constitution requires "general unity rather than absolute uniformity" among affiliates and the national organization. However, in stating that "the rule is not strictly enforced," he shows his misunderstanding of the rule. Even as it is phrased the rule suggests that the tolerance of "unorthodoxy" is not a grudging concession. Rather it is an affirmation of the desirability of some diversity. Our forty-nine affiliates decide their own policies according to their own best assessments of the issues in the context of the realities they confront. For one thing, realities often differ somewhat from state to state. For another, the national Board of Directors does not claim infallibility (how peculiar such a claim would be in ACLU), and neither do the affiliate boards. In sum, we do march to the beat of the same drummer—we just don't do it in lock-step.

7) Mr. Bishop hedgingly states that the ACLU "staff *seems* almost solidly in the activist, or hyperactivist, camp" (emphasis added). He then uses this implication throughout the article as a factual premise. Mr. Bishop literally does not know the ACLU staff. He supports his contention by selectively quoting from the public statements of a few staff members. He could have chosen other public statements by the same staff members to draw the opposite conclusion. Neither conclusion is accurate. If the ACLU staff share any intellectual characteristic beyond dedication to civil liberties, it is the independence of their thinking.

8) We do not spend more time defending persons of "leftish persuasion" because of our "ardor," as Mr. Bishop claims. We spend more time defending them because the government spends more time prosecuting them. There have been few cases of repression of the right wing in recent years; those that there have been usually have been challenged by ACLU, including the last two "right-wing" cases heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, one involving the Ku Klux Klan and the other involving the National States Rights party.

9) Mr. Bishop examined one partial docket of new ACLU cases for one period and concluded that ACLU in recent years has not been defending right-wing organizations. In fact, every one of the right-wing organizations Mr. Bishop names has recently been defended by ACLU. (And many of those defenses were reported in the New York *Times*, the only arguably independent source Mr. Bishop claims to have seriously studied.) The Grand Dragon of the North Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is currently being represented by ACLU in a federal lawsuit challenging his dismissal from his job as a clerk in the Charlotte Building Inspection Department because of his Klan association. Young Americans for Freedom last spring was aided by the Connecticut CLU, which was successful in asserting the YAF youngsters' right to the same privileges in Enfield High School as other student groups—use of bulletin boards, distribution of political literature without prior approval by the school's administration, etc.

10) Mr. Bishop contends that our dealings with the Right "are intended principally to embarrass the other party." When the KKK last summer accepted the help of the New Jersey ACLU in a case involving cross burnings, then rejected it because one ACLU volunteer lawyer was black, the ACLU of New Jersey issued a public statement defending the KKK's absolute right to counsel of their

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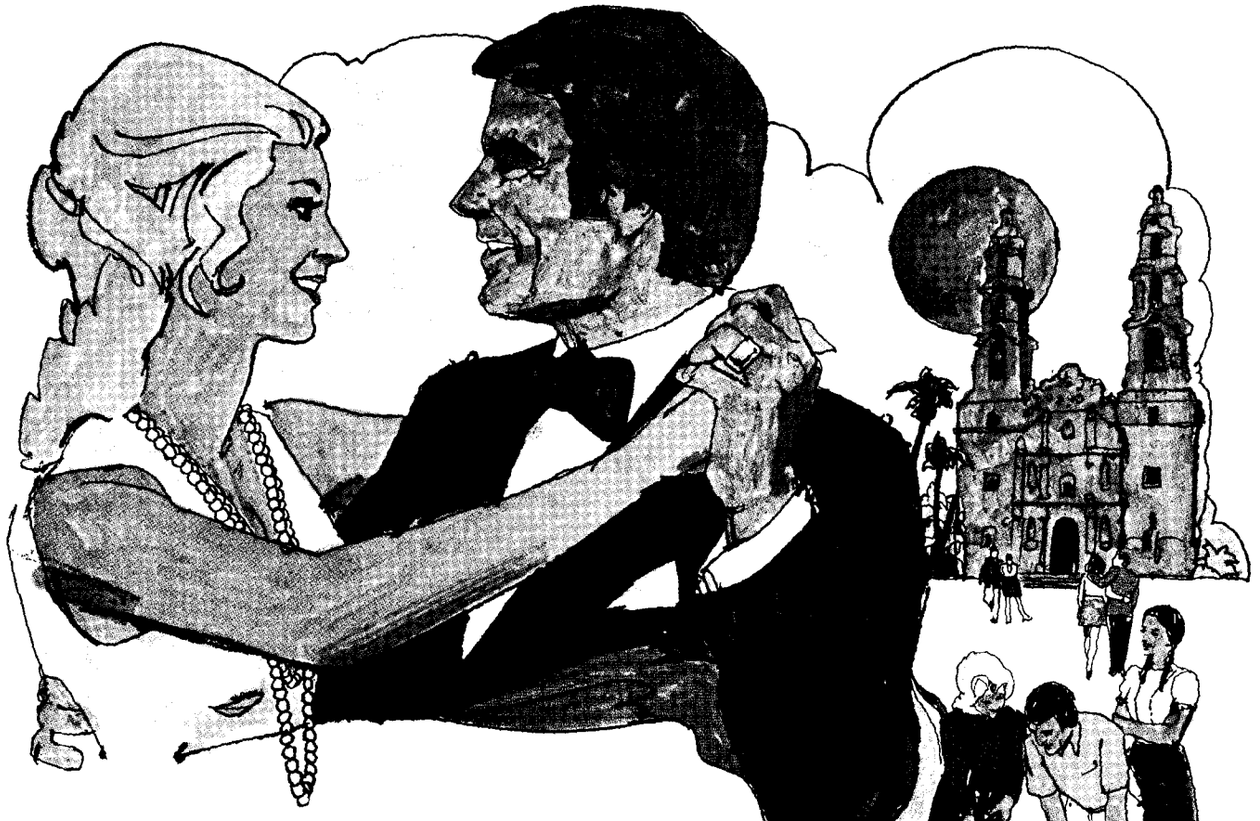

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choice and reiterating its dismay at the prosecution. ACLU's action was painfully principled; only malice could achieve its distortion.

11) Mr. Bishop cites our condemnation of the House Internal Security Committee for smearing individuals and our failure to react to "Wright Patman's pillorying of the Penn Central Railroad" as evidence of pro-Left bias. Perhaps the New York CLU's recent condemnation of the Knapp Commission's smearing of policemen will redress that balance. It deals precisely with civil-liberties issues (and Mr. Bishop's example of the Penn Central matter does not seem to).

12) Mr. Bishop criticizes the ACLU staff for making public statements that are not authorized by the ACLU policy guide. ACLU opposes the Hatch Act on grounds of freedom of speech and publicly criticized the NAACP several years ago when it fired a lawyer for publishing "unorthodox" views. It would be anomalous for ACLU to impose comparable restrictions on the speech of its own staff.

13) Mr. Bishop criticizes ACLU Legal Director Melvin Wulf for insisting on a "sweeping" construction of the First Amendment in the Pentagon Papers case and applauds the New York *Times* for opting for a much narrower construction. Actually, the position taken by the New York *Times* in its briefs was not very different from ACLU's at all. Mr. Wulf's criticism went to the emphasis put on the narrower arguments by the *Times* lawyers in the courtroom.

14) Eason Monroe is not suing Greenleaf Classics, as Mr. Bishop claims, nor has he ever questioned their "freedom to publish." Dr. Monroe has never publicly stated his personal concern over the Greenleaf matter, but for the record: Greenleaf asked Dr. Monroe to write an introduction to the *Report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography*. Dr. Monroe did not learn that Greenleaf was adding illustrations until he saw the edition in print. In writing his introduction, Dr. Monroe said readers would find nothing shocking in the report, a statement which would seem to indicate his personal approval of the Greenleaf illustrated edition. Dr. Monroe's sole concern was Greenleaf's misrepresentation of his personal appraisal of the content of the work.

15) Contrary to Mr. Bishop's assertion, our record is not "bare of criticism of unruly defendants and their lawyers." We issued a full policy statement on February 16, 1970, which, while condemning Judge Julius Hoffman's contempt citations in the Chicago "conspiracy" case, noted that summary contempt powers may justifiably be used "where it is necessary to summarily and instantly and immediately vindicate the dignity of the court."

16) Mr. Bishop wonders why ACLU offered to join the Berrigan defense. We did so because a frame-up of leading political advocates seriously threatens both due process and free speech and, contrary to Mr. Bishop's evaluation, we do see a frame-up. True, we have been unable to defend many of the thousands of less famous persons who have been denied fair trials; but we have, I am thankful to say, been able to defend many other thousands.

17) Mr. Bishop criticizes ACLU for spending time and money on such "peripheral" issues as the propriety of Howard Levy's confinement while his court-martial conviction was under review. To Howard Levy, who served his full sentence in prison before his case was ever heard on its merits by a civilian court, the issue could not have seemed peripheral. We are not concerned with civil liberties as a legal principle alone; we are concerned—very much so—with civil liberty as a reality. Mr. Bishop's expressed doubt that the Levy case was a "good" one for testing First Amendment issues is even more baffling: four of the five charges against Howard Levy were pure speech charges for statements he made in private conversations and correspondence that would promote "disloyalty and disaffection" among the troops (the fifth was a charge of disobeying an order to train Green Berets in medical techniques).

18) Mr. Bishop (also former Acting General Counsel of the Army Bishop) accuses ACLU of bringing "petty" lawsuits against the armed forces. He accuses us also of willingness to jump into notorious cases, e.g., the Berrigan case. Which shall it be? We determine, case by case, where we can most effectively use our limited resources. Question our wisdom, but on what ground does Mr. Bishop question our integrity?

19) Mr. Bishop several times refers to what the courts are likely to uphold as a standard for what

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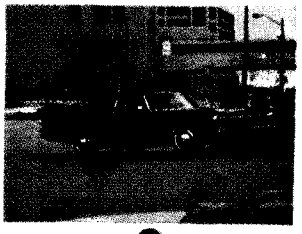

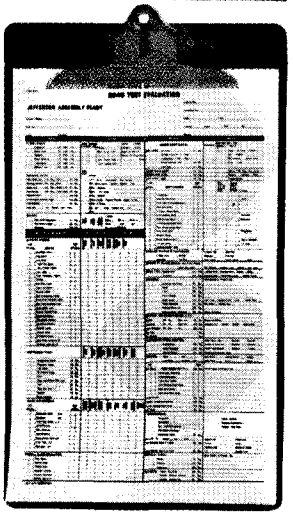

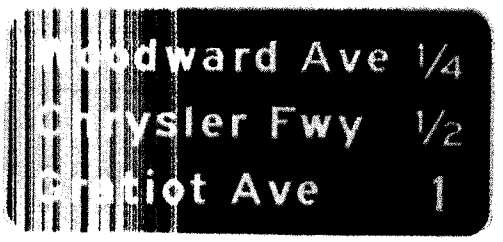

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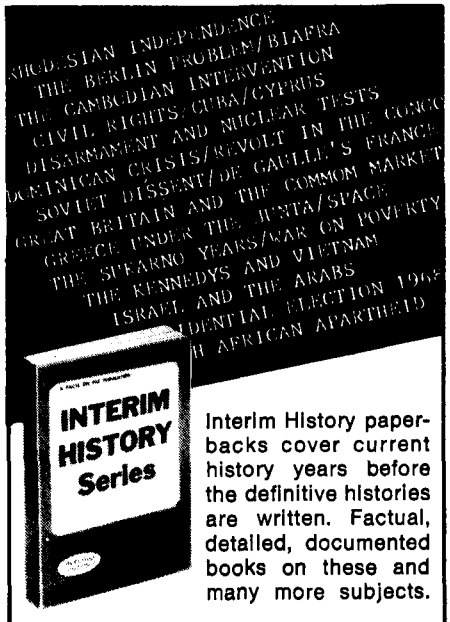

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ACLU should advocate. What sort of integrity is that? Isn't that, rather, playing "politics"?

20) Mr. Bishop predicts that ACLU's membership will dwindle because of its "politics" of the past five years. We have comforting proof to the contrary. We grow at an ever-increasing rate (in fact, we added 20,000 members between the time Mr. Bishop got his 150,000 figure for the first paragraph of his article and the time the article was published).

ARYEH NEIER
Executive Director
American Civil Liberties Union
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . To the degree that Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. demonstrates the influence of political bias on the policies and actions of ACLU, he is underscoring a real danger to its civil-libertarian effectiveness. . . .

Mr. Bishop characterizes himself as a "conventional and unimaginative civil libertarian" and would limit the range of civil-libertarian intervention to such "traditional activities" as church-state relations, censorship questions, franchise restrictions, and preventive-detention matters. But this is hardly an adequate approach today. If First Amendment rights were the burning civil-liberties issues when ACLU was founded, then today the constitutional application of due process and equal protection of the law to previously nonexistent or ignored groups of people like welfare clients, blacks, students, soldiers, mental patients, prisoners, women, and others has considerably expanded the scope of civil-libertarian responsibility. ACLU can do no less than follow the reach of the Bill of Rights as it penetrates into new arenas of social struggle. . . .

The "activist" tendency in ACLU can be understood as a distortion of this genuine extension of due process for political ends. But the defense of the due-process rights of the poor and the oppressed is no less urgent, and no less a civil-libertarian issue, because some civil libertarians have adopted the poor as their political clients. There are important civil-liberties issues in what appear to be areas of "distributive justice." For example, when the NYCLU won a court victory that established the right of a welfare client to a hearing before being deprived of his payments, it gained an important civil right for an entire class of people. In recent years the growth of welfare law has generated important civil-liberties issues. In other words, to attack politicization in ACLU because it departs from "traditional" civil-liberties issues is merely to exchange one kind of setback to civil libertarianism for another.

Another difficulty with Mr. Bishop's approach is its failure to put the political activism he opposes in the context of ACLU's overall civil-libertarian activity. There is certainly plenty of rhetoric in ACLU. Even when the deeds are civil libertarian, the words take on a political hue. When the NYCLU won the welfare case mentioned above, for example, the outcome was described as a victory for the "poor" in the class struggle rather than a victory for due process in the courts. Then there are the political effusions of Vice-Chairman Shack ("Hyde Park speeches"), the Neier-ian apologias for the "people" in courtroom disruptions and elsewhere, and of course the muddled hysteria of Melvin Wulf. But any assessment of ACLU in *action*, . . . should at least consider the 4,000 cases it litigated last year and its participation in 20 per cent of the cases before the Supreme Court. In other words, the record would show an aggressive civil libertarianism which is still predominantly within legitimate bounds. . . .

Unfortunately, there is enough in the distasteful tone of Mr. Bishop's article and in some of the evidence he offers to suggest that he is perhaps as much opposed to the active civil-libertarian work done by ACLU as he is to its political selectivity in its choice of cases. When he cites, for instance, ACLU's support of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in its fight against the curtailing of civil liberties in Canada, it is not clear whether he believes that there should have been any resistance at all to the abrogation of these rights. He charges ACLU with being silent about the state's emergency in trying to capture the terrorists, but he is himself silent about the emergency to civil liberties that was clearly involved. Is there political bias on more than one side here?

Mr. Bishop criticizes ACLU for its failure to support university authorities who tried to put down student violence in contrast to its acquiescence in student violations,

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an arena in which the staff has indeed been outrageously partisan. But as an example he cites ACLU's opposition to an injunction by the University of Connecticut "against the making on campus of obscene and disruptive statements in connection with defense contracts. . . ." However repugnant student behavior may be, isn't there a civil-libertarian obligation to oppose the prohibition of *statements*, not *acts*, of violence, on the campus, or anywhere else for that matter?

According to Mr. Bishop, when ACLU opposed, successfully as it turned out, the publication of the names of "Old and New Left revivalists" (Mr. Bishop's nonpartisan term) by the House Committee on Internal Security, it was guilty of partisanship because it failed to oppose the "pillorying of the Penn Central Railroad and its officers and directors" by Wright Patman. But the publication of these names would have constituted instant conviction of the "revivalists" without redress, whereas the officers and directors of the railroad have available to them all the resources of the law to fight for exoneration. While all "smears" are violations of one's right not to be smeared, a civil libertarianism which equates instant conviction for political beliefs or affiliations with a charge of business transgressions derives from strange premises.

It is one thing to criticize political selectivity of cases, it is quite another to imply that the cases selected do not warrant civil-libertarian action. The danger in criticizing the political activists is to judge their deeds by their motives, to see "politics" where there are civil liberties, and to fail to see civil-liberties issues where they are intermixed with social struggles.

Mr. Bishop refers to a "dissident faction" in the New York Civil Liberties Union which protested that affiliate's intervention in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community-control controversy. This unnamed "faction" is the New York Membership Committee for Civil Liberties which has been opposing the political turn in the NYCLU for over three years. It has had the material support of many members in putting out *Civil Liberties Forum*, which I edit, and the electoral support of one-third of the membership voting in three election campaigns for the Board of Directors. (Recently this faction has filed a court suit to force a change in the by-laws to make it possible for dissenting minorities to function effectively in the tight, bureaucratic structure of the NYCLU.)

In the eleven issues of the *Forum*, there has been constant criticism of the political tendency inside the NYCLU. But this dissent, this "continuing row" as Professor Bishop puts it, has always been from the standpoint of partisans of an NYCLU which, despite the irrepressible political hungers of some of the staff, has continued to function as a civil-libertarian force.

The danger of the politicization of ACLU is real enough, but so is the danger of jettisoning ACLU because of it. The task is to defend ACLU by opposing the political activists, not to give up on ACLU because of them. Even if Mr. Bishop were more correct than he is when he balances the "harm" and the "good" that ACLU is doing, it would be wise to heed the admonition of Tourtoulon, the French jurist, who cautioned: "There is no need to throw to the dogs everything that is not fit for the altar of the gods."

STANLEY ENGELSTEIN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As an ACLU'er for the past twenty-five years and a member of one of its national committees, I have agreed with the Union's policies and activities far more often than not. Consequently, reading "Politics & ACLU" I felt somewhat like a restaurant patron who is served a side dish which he hadn't ordered. Not that I had been unaware of the trend of events within ACLU, but it was nevertheless a bit disconcerting to see it delineated with such precision and command. A solid refutation of Mr. Bishop's thesis that ACLU has become politicized would be most welcome, but I fear that it will not be forthcoming. While certain of his allegations may be questionable or rebuttable, for example, his flat rejection of ACLU's contention that U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia is unconstitutional, *taken as a whole* Mr. Bishop's critique rings true. And this is bad news for ACLU, its increased membership notwithstanding.

If ACLU is to carry on its mission of protecting civil liberties and due process of law for everybody, it is not healthy for its actions to be tinged, even in the slightest degree, with ideological considera-

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tions. Nor is it healthy for it to be guilty of selective indignation when civil liberties are violated. Yet this is what has been happening, as Mr. Bishop makes clear, in noting the Union's relative silence when New Left campus groups repeatedly shouted down speakers of whom they disapproved and, in effect, suppressed them.

Reading the publications both of the national body and of its New York affiliate, it is hard to escape the judgment that a fair proportion of what is written is rather tendentious, to say the least. As Mr. Bishop judiciously observes, the causes ACLU appears to champion may be moral or even right (or, I would add, they may be neither), but in any case such causes are not the Union's reason for being. It is one thing, for example, for ACLU to affirm vigorously the right of accused Black Panthers to equal protection of the laws and to do battle accordingly. This clearly is ACLU's business. But it is quite another for ACLU spokesmen to emit vibrations of institutional sympathy for the Black Panther movement.

In an article in the *New York Law Journal* some time ago, ACLU's present Executive Director, Aryeh Neier, condoned disruptive behavior in court by accused Panthers in New York on the grounds that what was happening was not really a trial at all but rather a political confrontation.

There has indeed been governmental repression of civil rights and liberties in America, and the potential for further repression is quite real, particularly if violent crime or revolutionary disorders were to escalate. But there also has been, and there still is, a huge reservoir of political and individual liberty in this country (thanks, in part, to the efforts of ACLU), though one might hardly think so when reading some of ACLU's pronouncements. . . .

In sum, Mr. Bishop's article was saddening, not because it is farfetched, but because it is all too accurate. So much of what he says hits the nail right on the thumb. Painful as it may be. it would be regrettable for the Union to pay it no heed.

SAMUEL RABINOVE
White Plains, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"Politics & ACLU" reveals the leftward political bias of the Union that seems to prevent those of us on the political Right from obtaining equal treatment.

As a National Director of the conservative Young Americans for Freedom, I am most familiar with ACLU's consistent denial of our infrequent requests for legal aid.

For example, at the University of Tennessee, Young Americans for Freedom requested aid from ACLU in its effort to launch a legal challenge to the university's policy of financing political speakers. At present, all students have to pay a mandatory activities fee which is used to finance the speakers program. . . . Our request, needless to say, was turned down. . . .

ALAN MERRIL GOTTLIEB
Young Americans for Freedom
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. fulminates and fumes against ACLU for spending its time and money on litigation to establish the unconstitutionality of the draft, and adds: "It is nearly as unlikely that the Court will agree with the Union's contention that the present military involvement of the United States in Southeast Asia is unconstitutional. As a political matter, that involvement may be very unwise, but unless and until Congress exercises its power to withhold men and money, *it is sanctioned by the Constitution*" (emphasis added). In this statement, I fear that Mr. Bishop has replaced legal perception with sophistry. To equate Congressional power "to withhold men and money" with the constitutional sanction of the war in Vietnam is certainly a curious legal conceit.

ACLU now seeks to enforce Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution which clearly states that Congress, among its many other powers, shall have the power to *declare* war; observe, not to *make* war, but to declare war. This was a deliberate distinction made by our Founding Fathers.

There are lengthy notes on the preparation and adoption of the Constitution. On August 17, 1787, the issue "To make war" was on the agenda:

> MR. PINKNEY: opposed the vesting [of] this power in the Legislature. Its proceedings were too slow. . . .
>
> MR. BUTLER: . . . . He was for vesting the power in the President, who will have all the requisite qualities,

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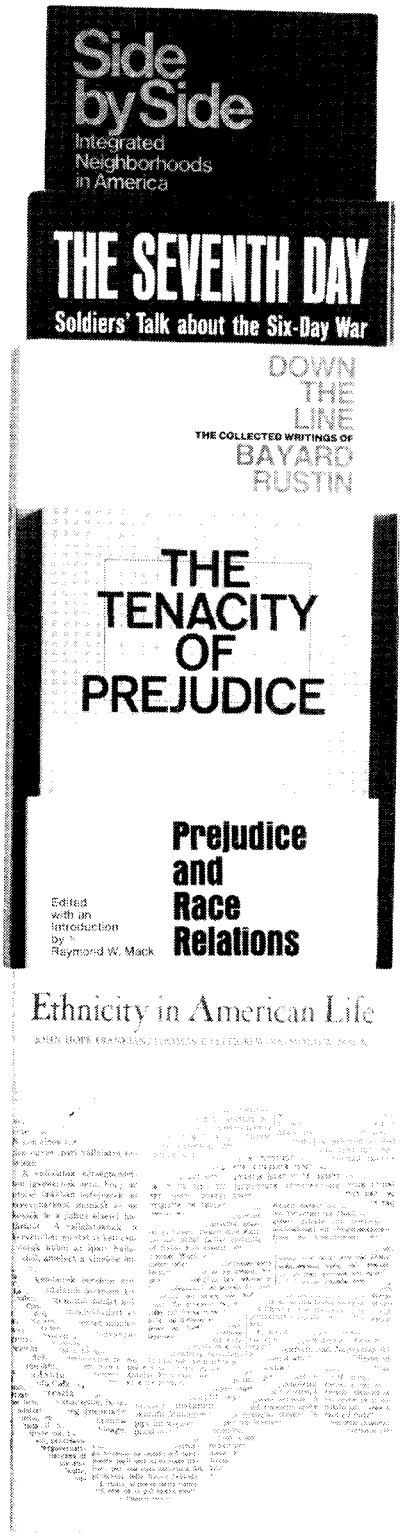
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and will not make war but when the Nation will support it. [How wrong he was!—L.L.]

MR. MADISON and MR. GERRY: moved to insert "declare," striking out *"make"* war; leaving to the Executive the power to repel sudden attacks.

MR. SHERMAN: thought it stood very well. *The Executive should be able to repel and not to commence war* [emphasis added]. "Make" is better than "declare," the latter narrowing the power too much.

MR. GERRY: *never expected to hear in a republic a motion to empower the Executive alone to declare war* [emphasis added].

MR. ELSWORTH: there is a material difference between the cases of making *war* and making *peace*. It should be more easy to get out of war, than into it. War also is a simple and overt declaration. Peace attended with intricate & secret negotiations.

MR. MASON: was against giving the power of war to the Executive, *because not safely to be trusted with it* [emphasis added]. . . . He preferred *"declare"* to "make."

On the motion to insert *declare*—in place of *make*, it was agreed to. [*Formation of the Union*, Government Printing Office, pp. 561-62.]

The fact that the Congress has failed to withhold men and money proves little about the constitutionality of the war in Vietnam, but it does prove that the Congress has supinely abdicated its powers to the executive branch of the government.

Congress, with some notable exceptions, flees from a scrupulous examination of an infected wound; and it flees as well from an inquiry into its own constitutional responsibilities. The great majority of Congressmen are unfaithful to their duties and unequal to their task, with the independence they profess conditioned by their real servility to the masters who dispense honors and benefits. Our Founding Fathers gave us a great heritage and a profound moral legacy. Congress has been neither a shield nor a sword in defense of these values.

It may be that Congress is helpless. If so, we had better recognize that destiny will not be kind to us.

The power of the Presidency is awesome and patronage may well make cowards of us all. In spite of Norman Podhoretz's assurance that "never has there been so great a degree of civil freedom, probably in the history of the world," 60,000 young Americans have sought refuge in Canada and hundreds more are in jail, hostages to our brand of civil freedom.

It was never the idea of those who wrote our Constitution that the President, alone, could *make* his own little wars (Cambodia and Laos) . . . .

It helps not at all to say that "it is nearly as unlikely" (whatever that means) that the Court will change its mind about the constitutionality of the draft and the war in Vietnam. The Supreme Court has said it is not bound by precedent.

Mr. Bishop says, "For half a century [ACLU] has done more than any other organization to enforce the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments of the Constitution." Consequently, and notwithstanding Mr. Bishop, I shall continue paying my dues and making my contributions to ACLU in tribute to that distinguished record.

LEONARD LEVY
Vice-President
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Most of Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.'s attack on the recent activities of ACLU seems persuasive, but not so his offhand dismissal of ACLU's argument that America's role in Indochina is unconstitutional. There is a *prima facie* case for such a court challenge: 1) Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution grants Congress the power to declare war; 2) Congress had not declared war against North Vietnam or the NLF; 3) nonetheless, our actions in Southeast Asia indisputably constitute a war. To be sure, I would not go so far as to argue that our military involvement in Southeast Asia is *undeniably* unconstitutional, for past precedent and Congress's failure to cut off funds, it might be argued, constitute a *de facto* declaration of war. But these actions might equally *not* be so construed, and there hardly seems to be any doubt that the war can be legitimately *challenged* on constitutional grounds. Indeed, for a professor of law to argue or strongly imply the contrary is quite remarkable. Mr. Bishop is very free in drawing inferences about ACLU's political motivations; might not his readers then be equally justified in drawing the inference from his handling of this matter, as well as from his tone of lofty amusement toward the Berrigans and their supporters, that it is his own political views which account for at least some of his opposition to ACLU?

JEROME SLATER
Department of Political Science
State University of New York at Buffalo
Buffalo, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . . I have had great respect for the principles of ACLU, and for many years had great respect for its actions. It is obviously imperative for a free society that dissent be protected, that unpopular stances be permitted, and that the channels for change and growth be kept unclogged. To me, the idea of ACLU has been that of civility, of encouraging growth and change via persuasion and discussion rather than coercion. During the days of McCarthyism and the House Un-American Activities Committee, etc. ACLU did a good job. But, in light of recent actions, one has almost been forced to believe that the allegiance of ACLU has all along not really been to civility, reasoned discourse, and free discussion, but rather to an emotional commitment and sympathy for rebellion against authority. For during the past few years, when those who have been repressing free speech, reasoned discourse, and civility have been those in rebellion and not the authority wielders themselves, ACLU has been relatively silent in any criticism or in sounding alarms. In some cases, it has even departed from its proclaimed stance of being officially neutral concerning the substance of speech, the free exercise of which it has pledged itself to protect, and has taken positions against those in authority on substantive matters. . . .

LEONARD S. SANDWEISS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a card-carrying member of the American Civil Liberties Union, and as a student and teacher of the history of civil liberties in the United States, I marvel at Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.'s ability to fire so many rounds of verbal buckshot yet miss the target so consistently. His bill of particulars against ACLU is reducible to the

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following dubious propositions:

In some golden libertarian age ACLU was virtuous—i.e., principled; now it has fallen from grace—i.e., it is political. In fact, since its founding ACLU has comprised an uneasy alliance of libertarian "idealists," who viewed the Bill of Rights as an end in itself, and libertarian "instrumentalists," who used the Bill of Rights as a means to hasten social change. Neither group enjoys a monopoly on virtue—nor on historical legitimacy.

Principled libertarianism is demonstrated only by equivalent defense of the liberties of Right and Left; success in this enterprise is measured by counting ACLU clients and weighing their politics. In the best of all worlds, where repression was dispensed in equivalent doses, this would be a fair test. But this isn't that world. The special strain of American anti-radical pathology has, since the coming of industrialization, made critics on the Left particularly vulnerable. Given the persistent imbalance in power relations between Left and Right in American society, it would be an egregious perversion of equality for ACLU to behave as Mr. Bishop wishes it to. It is the social context that shapes ACLU responses—more leftists are defended, and should be, because the liberties of leftists are more precarious.

The legal system is the true embodiment of everything excellent—a truth ignored by the politicized ACLU. Mr. Bishop would have us believe that because courts have refused to accept the argument that the draft is unconstitutional it is absurd for ACLU to present such an argument now; that because the Supreme Court would have rejected a broad interpretation of freedom of the press in the Pentagon Papers case we must not only hail the wisdom of the *Times*'s counsel (behold, Mr. Bishop's Yale Law School colleague, Alexander Bickel!) for presenting a narrow, good-for-this-trip-only argument—but we must chastize ACLU for indicating its displeasure with a brief that weakened principle with expediency. Could it be that the fault, in both instances, lies with judicial modesty rather than with ACLU activism?

Mr. Bishop's self-described "conventional and unimaginative" libertarianism may suit him, but his political preferences should not serve as a model for ACLU. The choice is not between libertarianism and politics, but between two varieties of libertarian politics—active and passive. Conventional types may enjoy the luxury of hand-wringing only as long as unconventional and imaginative libertarians within ACLU fight actively to defend, and extend, the principles for which their organization stands.

JEROLD S. AUERBACH
Department of History
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the last paragraph of his article Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. hints at an explanation for the drift of ACLU from its historical course: ". . . the Union suffers from a problem created by its very success: to find new battles and victories." . . . The shifting of organizational energies to newer and more "in" battlefields is after all not an unfamiliar phenomenon on the American scene. . . . Even government committees that were created to perform only one specific task somehow hang on for years and years beyond the accomplishment of that task. . . .

In the light of the above, the case of ACLU is not atypical. Perhaps the "thinking" segment of ACLU's constituency might have expected more intellectual integrity and less "empire building" from the organization. After all, ACLU is neither a government committee nor the March of Dimes. It would in fact have been an event of no little historical significance if ACLU had publicly declared that the main task for which it was established had, for the nonce anyway, been accomplished and had then directed its followers to divert their financial and personal support to the many new and active organizations fighting today's political battles under their own banners. . . . But such, alas, was not to be. . . .

RONALD GRUEN
Dallas, Texas

JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR. writes:

The first paragraph of Aryeh Neier's letter says more about the mentality of ACLU's present leadership than did anything in my article. My point of view is in fact as distant from Senator Thurmond's as it is from Mr. Neier's, and I thought I made it pretty plain that I do not view the ACLU as Senator Thurmond (I assume) views the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. (But I suppose I ought to be grateful. Mr. Wulf would probably have compared me to Heinrich Himmler.) I wouldn't have bothered to write about ACLU at all if I hadn't thought that it was a very important and useful organization, some of whose present policies threaten great harm to itself and consequently to the cause of civil liberties. Mr. Neier, however, equates disagreement with his own opinions to implacable prejudice against ACLU.

Mr. Neier's description of my testimony on the Emergency Detention Act is another excellent illustration of the mental processes and methods of debate of ACLU "activists." I expressed the opinion in substance that in any of the three great emergencies to which that Act was applicable (invasion, declared war, and insurrection in aid of a foreign enemy) it would almost certainly be held constitutional and that, moreover, its express provision for judicial review of individual cases, through petitions for habeas corpus, placed on the power of the executive in such emergencies limitations which the Supreme Court might not have found in the Constitution. (Presidents Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt issued wartime Executive Orders, whose constitutionality the Court managed not to pass upon, which denied access to the courts to certain classes of persons confined for reasons of national security. In neither case was there Congressional authority for the suspension of the writ.) Mr. Neier does not mention, and may not know, the fact that the Act was not Senator McCarran's creature, but was sponsored by a group of liberals, including Senators Kilgore, Douglas, Benton, Lehman, Kefauver, and Humphrey. I strongly suspect that the reason Messrs. Nixon and Mitchell did not oppose its repeal was their belief that in such crises the President would have broader powers without it than with it. But Mr. Neier, possibly because he had not actually read my testimony and was unfamiliar with the complex constitutional issue, uses my testimony on that issue to support an insinuation that I favor concentration camps.

I regret that it was not feasible for me to come to New York to talk to Mr. Neier and his staff, but I doubt that what they said in pri-

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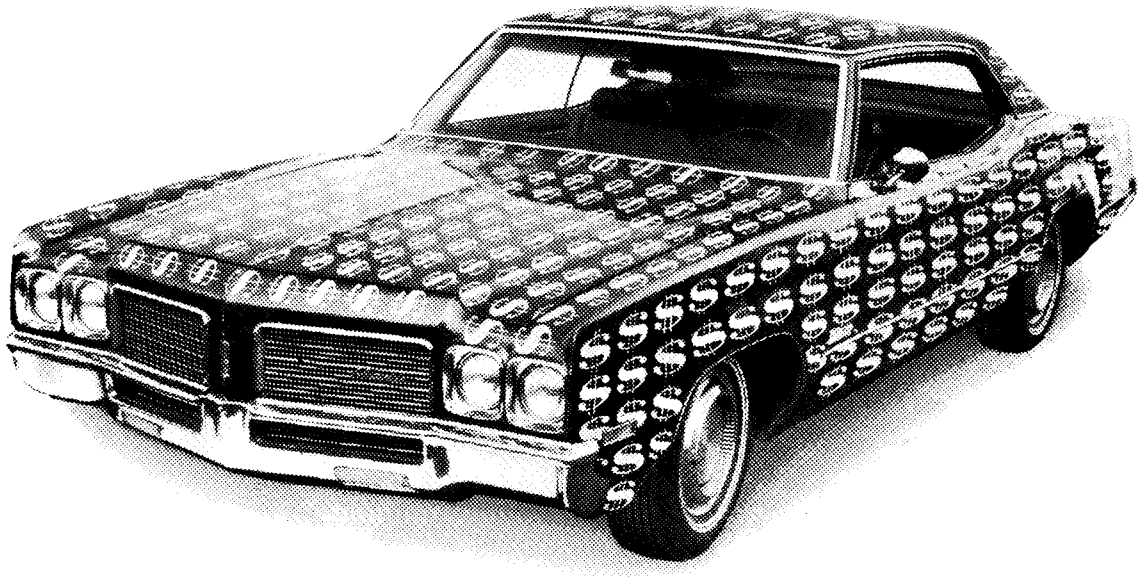

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vate would have been much different from what they say in public. I had access not only to the material which Mr. Neier sent to me, but also to much that he did not send, such as the Union's Policy Guide, the minutes of recent meetings of its national Board of Directors (to the extent that they were not, as in the Berrigan case, in Executive Session and classified), the most recent report of the Legal Director, and, of course, ACLU's annual reports. Prior to publication I gave copies of my manuscript to three persons who are prominent, active, and well-informed on the Union's affairs. One had no comments; two suggested comparatively minor corrections and emendations, which I made. I think it is obvious from Mr. Neier's letter that even his microscopic examination did not turn up substantial inaccuracies. He is uncharacteristically silent on my most serious charges, notably those relating to the ACLU management's condoning "political" violence by left-wingers and its indifference to assaults on free speech by left-wing storm-troopers. I shall comment on his complaints *seriatim*, using the same numeration as his paragraphs.

1) My statement that ACLU's lawyers "actively litigate about a hundred *major* cases a year" (emphasis added) was based on the report of the Legal Director, dated February 4, 1971, which purported to list all cases entered by the national legal office since February 1970, and which included 94 such cases. I assume Mr. Wulf's list was correct and complete. I suspect that Mr. Neiers' reference to 2,200 cases includes a great many which are being litigated by the affiliates. This is part of a normal pattern of conduct of the central body's spokesmen. When they want to dissociate themselves from a local, they stress the diversity and independence of the affiliates; when they want to boast of size and scale, or take credit for an affiliate's actions, they lump them all together. I recognized the truth of the warning, in a letter to me from ACLU's Director of Public Relations, that it would be impossible in a magazine article of ordinary length to describe the policies and actions of all the affiliates. Accordingly, I confined myself to the parent organization and (to a lesser extent) the New York CLU, with passing references to two or three others, and in all cases I said as plainly as possible *which* CLU I was talking about.

2) I said that the editors and publishers of the "underground" press "rarely risk anything worse than harassment by their creditors," and here Mr. Neier amply proves my point. Mr. Neier triumphantly produces a grand total of four rather minor cases in which such sheets (of which there must be hundreds or even thousands) were involved in litigation. In three the courts upheld their rights; the fourth, whatever its merits, involved no issue of freedom to publish.

3) Again, Mr. Neier proves my point. If one-third of the membership of the NYCLU regularly supports opposition candidates, the row is certainly continuing; and Mr. Neier's choice of language (like Mr. Engelstein's) attests to its bitterness. Mr. Neier's accuracy in the use of words is on a level with his accuracy in other respects: a "paradigm," defined by Webster as "an example, model, or pattern," is not necessarily or usually fictional. I infer that Mr. Neier confused it with "parable."

4) The NYCLU's defense of the teachers' right to due process was so *pianissimo* (compared to its trumpet blasts on other issues) that it escaped not only my notice but also that of the UFT. Mr. Neier does not claim that NYCLU ever *did* anything to help enforce the teachers' rights.

5) Mr. Rabinove's letter is evidence that the "traditionalists" within ACLU are not happy about its "activist" control. It is typical of a number of letters which I have received, some of them from people who are, or were, prominent in ACLU.

6) Mr. Neier does not quote me or ACLU's constitutional provision in full. It also provides that the affiliates "shall act in accordance with the policies of the Union." I suppose "policies" means those stated in the Policy Guide, which also forbids the affiliates to take positions on national issues which do not accord with those of the national body and provides for the suspension or expulsion of an affiliate by vote of two-thirds of the national board.

7) It is quite true that I know the ACLU staff (with the exception of Mr. Wulf, with whom I have a slight personal acquaintance) only through their public statements. I don't suppose that Mr. Neier believes that he should refrain from criticizing Messrs. Nixon, Agnew, or Mitchell (or even me) because he has no personal acquaintance with them. I wish he had cited the alleged public statements by the staffers whom I quoted which would have supported an "opposite conclusion." I didn't find any, though I looked hard.

8) I took some pains to make clear that the paucity of right-wing clients was "not entirely a result of [ACLU's] own political predilections." I think the most important reason is probably that the right-wingers (with the exception of the Klan) are at the present time much less inclined to violence, and therefore less likely to collide with the law, than the left-wingers. I made adequate mention of the National States Rights party case and of ACLU's role in it.

9) The "partial docket" was not so described by the Legal Director. (See paragraph 1, *supra*.) According to the decision of the federal court in Grand Dragon Murray's case, Murray was represented by the *North Carolina* CLU, about whose policies and activities I said nothing. The same goes for the Connecticut CLU's defense of the Young Americans for Freedom's obvious right to be accorded the same privileges as other student groups. Both cases were eminently proper ones for a civil-liberties organization (much more so than many of the cases in which ACLU has leaped to the defense of left-wingers), and these actions of the North Carolina and Connecticut affiliates do them credit. But they prove very little about either ACLU, the NYCLU, or other affiliates. By Mr. Neier's own account—and I think it probable that he has scraped up whatever there was to scrape up—there is exactly one current case out of more than 2,200 in which an affiliate—not ACLU itself—is representing a right-wing client. In two cases (see also paragraph 10), affiliates have taken steps short of litigation to defend the constitutional rights of right-wing groups. Again, I think Mr. Neier proves my point.

10) I was aware that the New Jersey ACLU (on which I didn't comment) had put out a press release upholding the right of Ku Kluxers to burn crosses (presumably on their own lawns). I not only did not "distort" it; I didn't even mention it, because (see paragraph 1) I confined myself to the parent organization and the NY-

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CLU, with incidental references to two or three others, not including New Jersey. The New Jersey ACLU could not, of course, be expected to exclude its black lawyers from representing the KKK; but I suspect that it anticipated the Klan's reaction to the offer of a black lawyer and was not disappointed by that reaction. I fail to see why the defense of a Ku Kluxer's constitutional rights should be any more "painful" to civil libertarians than defense of the constitutional rights of a Black Panther.

11) I should have thought it obvious that Congressional condemnation of Penn Central officials, some of whom are defendants in civil litigation, and may become defendants in criminal proceedings, raises issues of constitutional due process. I agree with the NY-CLU's statement on the Knapp Commission's proceedings, which is one of its occasional involvements in a genuine civil-liberties issue.

12) In this paragraph Mr. Neier sets up and knocks down a straw man. I criticized some staffers, not because they said things which were inconsistent with the Policy Guide, but because they "are not always careful to distinguish their personal opinions from those of ACLU." Of course, they have a right to express their personal views.

13) Mr. Wulf's article said that "Mr. Bickel spent practically all his time at oral arguments *and in his briefs* arguing the separation of powers and statutory points. He addressed the First Amendment issue only in a perfunctory and formalistic way" (emphasis added). Characteristically, he also accused Mr. Bickel of subordinating his client's interests to his academic legal philosophy, coyly hinting that his development of this argument was limited by "the law of libel." (In the circumstances, there would be no question of libel unless his charges against Mr. Bickel were made with knowledge that they were false, or with reckless indifference to their truth or falsity.)

14) The minutes of the national board meeting of February 6 and 7, 1971, reported that Dr. Monroe had "retained a UCLA law professor to represent him in a possible legal action against Greenleaf Classics," and I erred in assuming that he had actually brought suit. In the circumstances I think he would have been fully justified in doing so.

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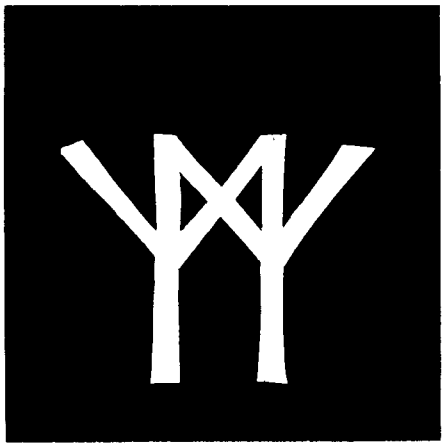

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15) A policy statement whose purpose was to place the narrowest possible limits on the power of a court to punish contempts committed in its presence, even though it recognized (as it had to) that such power exists in extreme circumstances, hardly amounts to "criticism of unruly defendants and their lawyers." The *New York Law Journal* article mentioned by Mr. Rabinove, which I had not seen (and which for some reason Mr. Neier did not include in the material he sent to me), seems a better example (or paradigm) of ACLU's attitude toward courtroom disruption. (To set the record straight, I believe that only in extreme circumstances should the court in whose presence a contempt is committed itself punish that contempt. I criticized Judge Hoffman's handling of the matter in an article in *Esquire* for April 1971.)

16) Mr. Neier does not say what evidence makes him so positive that the Berrigan indictment is a "frame-up." At this stage of the proceeding, I am aware of no such evidence, and I repeat that there is nothing novel or intrinsically incredible in the idea that religious fanatics may enforce what they take to be God's will by acts of criminal violence. It seems as irrational (and as improper for one who claims to believe in due process) to be convinced of innocence without having seen the evidence as to be convinced of guilt.

17) People convicted of crime are commonly (no doubt too commonly) confined pending appeal, and I am not aware that ACLU has made a great issue of it in any other case than Captain Levy's. The grounds for my opinion that his case was not a good one for testing the First Amendment rights of servicemen are simple and even obvious. Even if his conviction for making statements intended to promote "disloyalty and disaffection" among enlisted men were held unconstitutional, which I think at least doubtful, the conviction of disobedience of orders would still support the sentence. It is a fact of legal life that judges and Justices are less inclined to make new and controversial constitutional law when doing so is unlikely to cause any substantial change in the outcome of the actual case.

18) Mr. Neier seems to think he proves something by accusing me of having once been Acting General Counsel of the Army. As a matter of fact, I did nothing in that job about which I am, nearly twenty years later, in the least embarrassed. By similar (or better, though still fallacious) reasoning I could prove that ACLU's Board Chairman, Edward J. Ennis, favors putting unpopular minorities in detention camps, because he signed the government's briefs in the Japanese exclusion cases. I did not accuse ACLU of jumping into the Berrigan case because it was "notorious," but of jumping into it because of sympathy with the defendants' politics. Similarly, I think that ACLU's motivation in some of its sillier suits against the military is primarily political.

19) I think the chance of success should be, as it used to be, a powerful factor in choosing which issues and cases ACLU will litigate. The reason is the simple one that ACLU's resources, though large, are not unlimited.

20) I did not, of course, "predict" that ACLU's membership will dwindle, although I thought and still think that risk exists. If its membership becomes politically homogeneous, more interested in advancing the politics of the Left than in seeing that everybody gets the benefit of the Bill of Rights, I would regard an increase in that membership as useless or harmful to the cause of civil liberty.

So FAR as I can follow Mr. Engelstein's argument, I think he may have misunderstood my point. I certainly don't oppose ACLU's defending the constitutional rights of "previously nonexistent or ignored groups of people." On the contrary, ACLU might do a better job in this respect if it expended less of its time and energy on political causes. I don't understand his point about the House Internal Security Committee's list. So far as I know, none of the "Old and New Left revivalists" whom I mentioned has been, or is likely to be, "convicted" or even threatened with criminal prosecution for his speeches. But there has already been at least one criminal indictment in the Penn Central case, and more may follow.

Mr. Levy's constitutional argument is interesting, but it overlooks a good deal of material which other people might think relevant, from *The Eliza,* 4 Dallas 307 (1800) and *Bas* v. *Tingy,* 4 Dallas 36 (1800) to *Orlando* v. *Laird,* 443 F. 2d 1039 (1971) and

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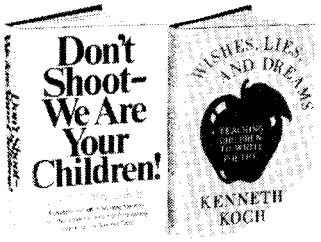

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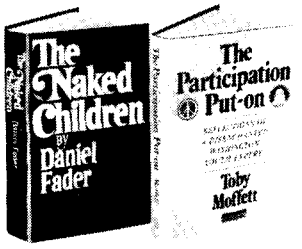

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. *Laird*, 451 F. 2d 26 (1971). In the former cases the Supreme Court found nothing unconstitutional in the conduct of armed hostilities against France, despite the lack of a declaration of war; in the latter, the United States Courts of Appeals for the First and Second Circuits similarly held that Congressional provision of men and money for the hostilities in Vietnam was sufficient to make constitutional the actions of the President. I think it most unlikely that the Circuit Courts will be reversed. I suggest that Mr. Levy read these decisions, old and new, and also an article by Professor Leonard Ratner on "The Coordinated Warmaking Power" at 44 *Southern California Law Review* 461 (1971), which, *inter alia*, chronicles the long history of the United States' involvements in "limited," undeclared, wars.

Loneliness

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Forster as Homosexual" [December 1971] Cynthia Ozick argues that *Maurice* should be considered as "a classical (though flawed and failed) fairy tale in which the hero is stuck with an ineradicable disability." I should like to suggest, however, that this insight applies specifically . . . to the affair between Maurice and Alec—rather than to the book as a whole.

Miss Ozick is certainly right that Maurice is much more like Forster himself than he was intended to be; but allowing for this shakiness in the central character, the love between Maurice and Clive is convincing enough, and their day of perfect happiness just before Maurice is sent down from Cambridge is very real. Maurice's despair when Clive abandons him is conveyed . . . with an intensity that Forster seldom equaled.

Maurice had found love and then lost it. That's what the book is about. The sense of being thrust back into loneliness and not being able to stand it is the central reality. The rest is fantasy. He cries into the night, "Come," and the handsome gamekeeper climbs through his window. The whole affair with Alec is simply a fantasy of revenge against Clive. Clive becomes fatuous and heavy: of course he would. Cambridge becomes a place of watery abstractions. Even Clive's estate is made to decay. The final denunciation, in the garden in the dark, is the very luxury of revenge. So I wasn't good enough for you—not respectable enough, not ethereal enough? Well, you don't know the half of it. I slept with your gamekeeper in your own house, and now I'm going off with him. To live in the greenwood.

This ending has the willfulness of despair—almost of madness. Forster says, in his Terminal Note, "A happy ending was imperative. I shouldn't have bothered to write otherwise." But the ending isn't happy, it is desperate. Alec tells us very clearly, in the London hotel room, why the idea of his living with Maurice is foolishness. And there is no reality at all to the "love" between them—hardly any reality to Alec himself except, barely, in the blackmailing scene.

The so-called criticism of society in the second half of the book is as unreal as the love. It is petulant and piecemeal: the predictable attitude of the rejected lover. These people! This world! The sun has been extinguished in the sky, and there they are going about their business as if nothing has happened. Fools: they deserve their fate.

The novel according to my interpretation is thus essentially about loneliness and despair, only incidentally about homosexuality. The "ineradicable disability" of Maurice, the fairy-tale hero, is really some kind of schizoid relationship to people—the desperate isolation that he had felt in his childhood, that he had escaped briefly and (it would have seemed to him) miraculously through Clive—and that he must now experience again. Must but will not: hence the imagined escape to the greenwood. Where, as Miss Ozick says, "wishing *does* make it so: the wish achieves its own fulfillment through its very steadfastness of desire."

ALFRED SHERRARD
Providence, Rhode Island

CYNTHIA OZICK writes:

Alfred Sherrard's preferred reading of the early chapters of *Maurice*—those parts where he takes issue with or departs from my own reading—is lucid, reasoned, and compassionate. If I, unlike Mr.

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State and municipal obligations	430,925,105	341,781,900
Other	8,232,586	9,799,466
	586,320,090	521,565,571
Federal funds sold	18,500,000	1,500,000
Loans	1,499,138,037	1,312,801,482
Direct lease financing	[illegible]	6,107,800
Bank premises and equipment	34,059,540	33,613,979
Customers' liability on acceptances	30,025,292	21,617,180
Other assets	28,132,191	26,434,605
Total Assets	$2,541,526,620	$2,196,962,305
LIABILITIES:		
Deposits:		
Demand deposits	$ 881,146,944	$ 894,059,769
Savings and time deposits	1,251,877,240	958,300,368
	$2,133,024,184	$1,852,360,137
Federal funds purchased and securities sold under agreement to repurchase	102,298,750	59,510,000
Funds borrowed	—	11,000,000
Mortgage notes payable	12,512,254	13,036,039
Acceptances outstanding	32,780,345	24,216,133
Dividends payable	41,235	43,146
Unearned income	22,311,247	23,313,380
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	19,512,768	15,796,503
Total Liabilities	$2,322,510,783	$1,999,275,338
RESERVE FOR LOAN LOSSES	32,741,000	32,741,000
CAPITAL:		
Capital notes and debentures	21,644,500	20,383,000
Equity Capital:		
Common stock, $5 par value; authorized, issued and outstanding— 6,183,666 shares	30,918,330	30,918,330
Surplus	69,081,670	69,081,670
Undivided profits	64,630,337	44,562,967
	164,630,337	144,562,967
Total Capital	186,274,837	164,945
Total Liabilities, Reserve and Capital	$2,541,526,620	[illegible]

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Sherrard, am not persuaded that the "day of perfect happiness" between Maurice and Clive "is very real," and if I miss altogether any hint of "an intensity that Forster seldom equaled," surely this cannot intrude on another reader's sense of how the novel "feels." Books read us, after all, and the emotional or temperamental discoveries they turn up in each of us differ because we differ from each other.

But I cannot agree with Mr. Sherrard that *Maurice* is "about loneliness and despair, only incidentally about homosexuality." A novel, it seems to me, is really about its particulars, not about an extraction from its particulars. I think it is a mistake—a fundamental mistake about the nature of the novelistic imagination—to try to suck out of any achieved organism (which is what a novel is) any general statement, any illustration of a principle or a thesis. This is not to deny the immanence of a principle or a thesis. If there are two ways to describe John—a) John is a representative of mankind; b) John is a featherless biped—the novelistic way is the featherless biped. The novel always intends its more concrete, most particularized, meaning; abstractions are only the novel's by-product, not its "central reality." If Mr. Sherrard will reverse his statement and say that *Maurice* is "about homosexuality, only incidentally about loneliness and despair," then he and I can meet halfway to agree that *Maurice* is a novel of *homosexual* loneliness and despair—because loneliness and despair have different resonances in different situations. The loss of a lover is not the same as the bereavement of a mother whose child has died, and what novels teach us is exactly what life whips us with: that concreteness is all, that experience is a pointillist progression, nail-point by nail-point, and that psychological generalities extracted from a predicament not only do not describe but inexorably betray the force of that predicament.

If anyone could ever write a novel which was really and truly "about loneliness and despair" as a "central reality," and "only incidentally" about the predicament which gave rise to those feelings, he would have written not a novel after all, but an essay by Montaigne.

Anti-Semitism

To the Editor of Commentary:

In reviewing Ben Halpern's *Jews and Blacks* [Books in Review, October 1971] Irving Howe attempts to escape criticism of his own conclusion, that ". . . Christians today are not likely to feel so strongly about the myth of Judas as did Christians at any point in previous Western history," by apologetically proclaiming that his thesis is only an assumption not based on "proof." I suspect, however, that Mr. Howe does wish his subjective conclusion to be taken seriously, no matter how little literary substantiation he offers.

Mr. Howe contends that anti-Semitism is bound to diminish because of the advances of a ". . . creeping skepticism . . . which eats into the substance of all religious life. . . ." This thesis presupposes anti-Semitism to be a *religious* belief, like heaven and hell or the virgin birth, that will be discarded with the advent of intellectualism and theological doubt. If anti-Semitism is so easily dissolved by the acidity of religious skepticism, how does Mr. Howe account for the unlikely apparition of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, where religious skepticism and indeed total rejection of Christianity and its mythos has been the official government doctrine since 1917? So much for Mr. Howe's dismissal of contemporary anti-Semitism.

As Judeophobia *does* seem to appear regardless of religious milieu—be it orthodox Christianity, Communist atheism, or Nazi paganism—it is more accurate to view anti-Semitism as a *cultural* phenomenon of Occidental civilization. Despite more than one thousand years of cultural ingraining, Mr. Howe is certain that contemporary Christians will not be likely to "perpetuate traditional Christian myths about the Jews." Obviously Mr. Howe is counting on his ". . . great mass of drowsy churchgoers . . ." to resist with creeping skepticism what Earl Raab describes as the common reservoir of anti-Semitic beliefs, "built almost ineradicably into our literature, into our language, into our most general cultural myths."

Irving Howe accuses Ben Halpern of ". . . not paying nearly enough attention to that process of creeping skepticism. . . ." Perhaps Mr. Halpern knows that intellectual development, no matter how fashionable or salient an explanation, has absolutely nothing to do with anti-Semitism; for as Giorgio de Santillana sadly observed, "there is more in a culture than is inscribed in its rational decisions."

William Evans Krisel
Arlon, Belgium

Irving Howe writes:

Anti-Semitism may not be a "religious belief," but in the West it has been closely connected with the myths, traditions, and institutions of Christianity. When William Evans Krisel says it is a "*cultural* phenomenon of Occidental civilization," why does he suppose he is contradicting me? Have not the myths, traditions, and institutions of Christianity been a major, perhaps the major, component of "Occidental civilization"?

It seems reasonable to suppose that an educated young Christian whose relationship to his church is tenuous will be less susceptible to savagery as a result of the myth of the Jew as Judas than was his fervently believing great-grandfather. That's all I was saying, and why it should rouse Mr. Krisel to such anger I don't know.

As for the rejection of religion by the Soviet government, that doesn't yet tell us anything about the way the Christian mythos, with an intertwined tradition of hostility toward Jews, may continue to hold the imagination of millions of Russians.

It's not clear to me whether Mr. Krisel's preposterous reference to my "dismissal of contemporary anti-Semitism" is a consequence of ill-will or an inability to read. In either case, I can assure him that I have never made such a "dismissal."

Psychoanalysis

To the Editor of Commentary:

Edith Kurzweil's comments on last summer's Psychoanalytic Congress in Vienna ["The (Freudian) Congress of Vienna," November 1971] seem unduly harsh. I attended the Congress, too, and as one of the younger analysts in the Los Angeles Society, I can testify to the vigorousness with which any and all issues of human psychology are being pursued within psychoanalysis. . . .

Edith Kurzweil appears to be a social scientist whose plea is for "relevance" to her field, including a reformulation of analytic terminology so that it will fit in more easily with that of the social

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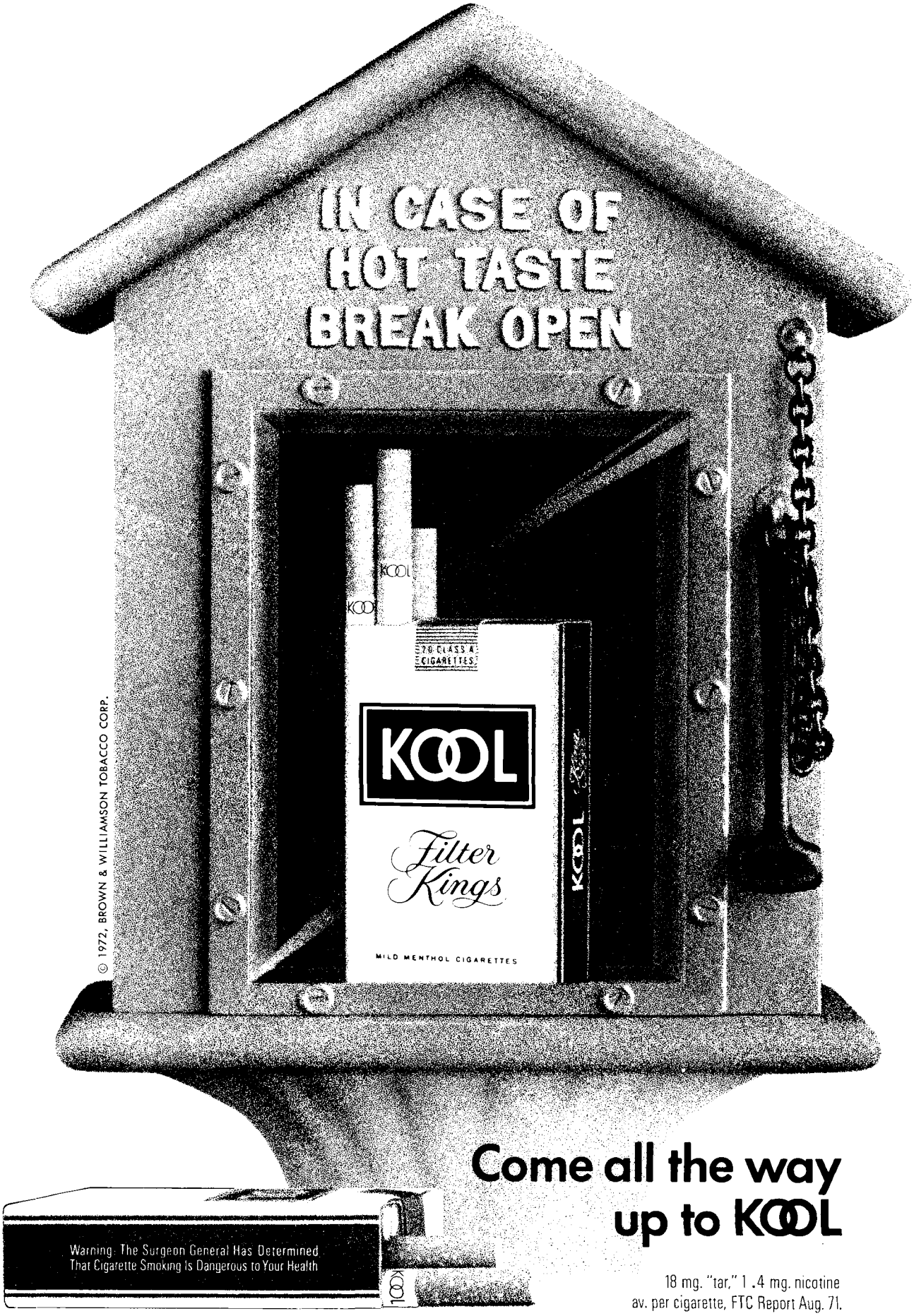

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sciences. She criticizes the abstract terms of analytic theory without apparently appreciating the problem of bridging the gap between clinical language—which is close to emotional experience—and the more abstract formulations which depart from direct observation and make possible the construction of higher levels of understanding. . . .

Most unkindly, Miss Kurzweil does not indicate an appreciation for the immensity of the psychoanalytic undertaking, which is nothing less than a comprehensive theory of function. In a short time, psychoanalysis *has* produced the most far-reaching understanding of human personality ever known. The psychoanalytic situation of analyst and analysand is par excellence a laboratory for that growing body of data which leads to theoretical advances. But Miss Kurzweil shows no warmth for this. Her comments on Freud and his daughter betray only irritation that homage should still be paid to the genius who broke the ground and the revered descendant who has given herself so fully to the task of developing our field. . . .

It must be said that committees do not produce great ideas, and that "psychoanalysis," however it may be organized, does not have a collective will that directs it, for example, toward the social sciences or in any other direction. But people *do* fix upon psychoanalysis for all the important answers (viewing analysts in the same manner that physicians have been traditionally regarded); they *do* tend to idealize, and the result often is the resurrection of old problems. With a combination of awe and hatred, the formerly-worshiped practitioners may become the butt of comments like these: "However 'accepting' or 'understanding' the individual analysts may be in their healing roles, as members of the organization they display all the characteristics of self-righteousness, in-fighting, and political amorality we usually associate with less exalted persons." There is much more of this sort of thing in the article, including references to the amount of food consumed by the . . . analysts.

How enjoyable a pastime for Edith Kurzweil from her Olympian aerie to speculate on the behavior of these men, suddenly become objects of study, virtually patients themselves! This self-congratulatory behavior, unsupported by evidence, contributes precisely nothing, and tends moreover to entice others to indulge their regressive appetites rather than to face the real issues squarely, with minds uncluttered by prejudice.

This, in microcosm, is the problem faced by psychoanalysis on a large scale, that is, how to preserve a body of hard-won knowledge against assault, while evolving toward higher levels of understanding in accordance with new information and novel conceptions.

But enough. I would hope that Miss Kurzweil might have brought a bit more generosity of spirit to her observations of a group of people doing exceedingly difficult work and striving to *understand* and to arrive at notions of truth. . . .

F. Robert Rodman, M.D.
Beverly Hills, California

To the Editor of Commentary:

It was with some distaste that I read Edith Kurzweil's surly description of present-day Vienna in her report on the Freudian Congress. Having traveled extensively in Austria and having studied in Vienna, I can honestly say that I encountered few of the sinister types so pervasive in her narrative.

It should be added, however, that I did not visit Vienna to judge its inhabitants. Miss Kurzweil, on the other hand, seems to have gone there for no other reason—which is not to say that she has been insincere! In the very meanness of her assaults—for example in her comments on the welcoming remarks of Austrian dignitaries to the Congress—smolders an earnest and passionate grudge. . . .

Paul Gottfried
New York City

Edith Kurzweil writes:

F. Robert Rodman's serious letter deserves comment, even though upon occasion he uses psychoanalytic interpretation—of dubious validity—to focus attention away from the issues. My "plea for relevance" was not alone to my field (sociology), nor was it to have the analysts present ready-made formulations for the social sciences. It was intended as a plea for (Freudian) psychoanalysis itself to use or examine what work has been done by other schools of analysis, by lay analysts, and by social scientists—in the U.S. and abroad—in addition to doing their clinical work. In that way some of the discussions of aggression (theoretical, clinical, and applied) might possibly have avoided jumping from the clinical to the societal level of the problems—without mediation.

Psychoanalysts have much insight and knowledge to offer, and not all of it, one hopes, will have to be preserved "against assault." Freud, in addition to creating the most far-reaching theory of human personality, gave public lectures and wrote general works like *Totem and Taboo* and *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Nothing pleased him more, according to Jones, than when Thomas Mann came to see him and presented him with the Goethe Prize of the city of Frankfurt. At Clark University, and elsewhere, he spoke to general audiences. His self-criticism and his openness to new ideas (on many levels, of course) seem to have been the mainspring of the evolution of his theory. It is exactly because "all issues of human psychology are being pursued *within* psychoanalysis" and they then "become a body of hard-won knowledge to be preserved," that I felt disappointed in the Congress. Although I never doubted the seriousness and devotion to the discipline of the analysts attending the Congress, I felt that while working on Freud's theories, they had (as a group) lost his spirit.

Of course, psychoanalysis has made tremendous strides since its beginnings, and some of the analysts who attended the Congress are responsible for some of these advances. Yet during this same period there have been new historical and sociological interpretations of the human condition, scientific advances, and, above all, the complex and quickly changing conditions of advanced industrial society. Unless a serious dialogue is begun between some of the other social scientists and the psychoanalysts, too few people will benefit from the findings of psychoanalysis. Is it really necessary, or in Freud's spirit, to "strive to *understand* and to arrive at notions of truth" by giving up the educational mission of psychoanalysis? Or is it not possible to do both?

Correction

In a footnote on page 14 of the February issue the title of Ben Halpern's book was incorrectly given. The correct title is *Jews and Blacks: The Classic American Minorities.*

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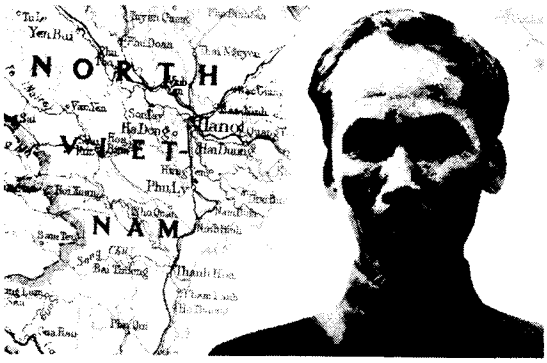

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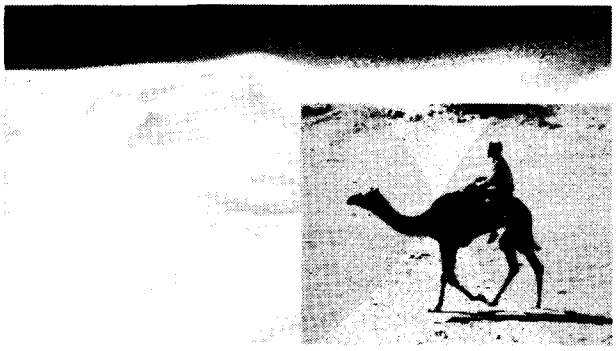

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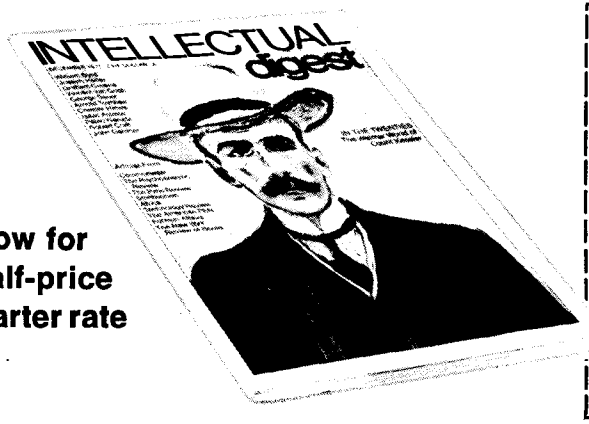

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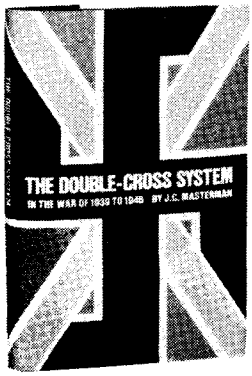

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edited by Robert Manson Myers

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Is Busing Necessary?

Nathan Glazer

It is the fate of any social reform in the United States—perhaps anywhere—that, instituted by enthusiasts, men of vision, politicians, statesmen, it is soon put into the keeping of full-time professionals. This has two consequences. On the one hand, the job is done well. The enthusiasts move on to new causes while the professionals continue working in the area of reform left behind by public attention. But there is a second consequence. The professionals, concentrating exclusively on their area of reform, may become more and more remote from public opinion, and indeed from common sense. They end up at a point that seems perfectly logical and necessary to them—but which seems perfectly outrageous to almost everyone else. This is the story of school desegregation in the United States.

For ten years after the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown*, little was done to desegregate the schools of the South. But professionals were at work on the problem. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund continued to bring case after case into court to circumvent the endless forms of resistance to a full and complete desegregation of the dual school systems of the South. The federal courts, having started on this journey in 1954, became educated in all the techniques of subterfuge and evasion, and in their methodical way struck them down one by one. The federal executive establishment, reluctant to enter the battle of school desegregation, became more and more involved.

The critical moment came with the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, in the wake of the assassination of a President and the exposure on television of the violent lengths to which Southern government would go in denying constitutional rights to Negroes. Under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act, the Department of Justice could bring suits against school districts maintaining segregation. Under Title VI, no federal funds under any program were to go to districts that practiced segregation. With the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, which made large federal funds available to schools, the club of federal withdrawal of funds became effective. In the Department of Justice and in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, bureaucracies rapidly grew up to enforce the law. Desegregation no longer progressed painfully from test case to test case, endlessly appealed. It moved rapidly as every school district in the South was required to comply with federal requirements. HEW's guidelines for compliance steadily tightened, as the South roared and the North remained relatively indifferent. The Department of Justice, HEW, and the federal courts moved in tandem. What the courts declared was segregation became what HEW declared was segregation. After 1969, when the Supreme Court ordered, against the new administration's opposition, the immediate implementation of desegregation plans in Mississippi, no further delay was to be allowed.

The federal government and its agencies were under continual attack by the civil-rights organizations for an attitude of moderation in the enforcement of both court orders and legal requirements. Nevertheless, as compared with the rate of change in the years 1954 to 1964, the years since 1964 have seen an astonishing speeding-up in the process of desegregating the schools of the South.

Writing during the Presidential campaign of 1968, Gary Orfield, in his massive study, *The Reconstruction of Southern Education*, stated:

> To understand the magnitude of the social transformation in the South since 1964, that portrait of hate [of black students walking into Little Rock High School under the protection of paratroopers' bayonets] must be compared to a new image of tense but peaceful change. Even in the stagnant red clay counties in rural backwaters, where racial attitudes have not changed much for a century, dozens or even hundreds of black children have recently crossed rigid caste lines to enter white schools. Counties with well-attended Ku Klux Klan cross-burnings have seen the novel and amazing spectacle of Negro

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teachers instructing white classes. It has been a social transmutation more profound and rapid than any other in peacetime American history.

This is a revolution whose manifesto is a court decision and whose heroes are bureaucrats, judges, and civil-rights lawyers. . . .

Mr. Orfield thought that it was all coming to an end. With Nixon attacking the guidelines that had brought such progress, and with the civil-rights coalition coming apart in the fires of the cities of the North, Mr. Orfield wrote, "A clear electoral verdict against racial reconciliation [that is, the election of Mr. Nixon] could mean that the episode of the school guidelines may recede into history as an interesting but futile experiment." Mr. Orfield underestimated the bureaucrats, the courts, and the overall American commitment to the desegregation of Southern schools. While Mr. Nixon's appointees were suffering the same abuse as Mr. Johnson's before them for insufficient zeal, the desegregation of the racially divided school systems of the South proceeded. Thus the Director of the HEW Office of Civil Rights, J. Stanley Pottinger, could summarize some of the key statistics as of 1970 in the following terms:

> When school opened in the fall of 1968, only 18 per cent of the 2.9 million Negro children in the Southern states attended schools which were predominantly white in their student enrollments. In the fall of 1970, that figure had more than doubled to 39 per cent . . . [and] the percentage of Negroes attending 100 per-cent black schools dropped . . . from 68 per cent to 14 per cent. In 1968, almost no districts composed of majority Negro (and other minority) children were the subject of federal enforcement action. It was thought . . . that the limited resources of government ought to be focused primarily on the districts which had a majority of white pupils, where the greatest educational gains might be made, and where actual desegregation was not as likely to induce white pupils to flee the system. . . . 40 per cent of all the Negro children in the South live in [such] systems. . . . Obviously, the greater the amount of desegregation in majority black districts, the fewer will be the number of black children . . . who will be counted as "desegregated" under a standard which measures only those minority children who attend majority white schools.
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> In order to account for this recent anomaly, HEW has begun to extract from its figures the number of minority children who live in mostly white districts and who attend mostly white schools. Last year, approximately 54 per cent of the Negro children in the South who live in such districts attended majority white schools. Conversely, nearly 40 per cent of the 2.3 million white children who live in mostly black (or minority) districts, now attend mostly black (or minority) schools.*

There has been further progress since, and if one uses as the measure the number of blacks going to schools with a majority of white children, the South is now considerably more integrated than the North.

YET THE desegregation of schools is once again the most divisive of American domestic issues. Two large points of view can be discerned as to how this has happened. To the reformers and professionals who have fought this hard fight—the civil-rights lawyers, the civil-rights organizations, the government officials, the judges—the fight is far from over, and even to review the statistics of change may seem an act of treason in the war against evil. Indeed, if one is to take committed supporters of civil rights at their word, there is nothing to celebrate. A year ago the Civil Rights Commission, the independent agency created by the Civil Rights Act of 1957 to review the state of civil rights, attacked the government in a massive report on the civil rights enforcement effort. "Measured by a realistic standard of results, progress in ending inequity has been disappointing. . . . In many areas in which civil-rights laws afford pervasive legal protection—education, employment, housing—discrimination persists, and the goal of equal opportunity is far from achievement." And the report sums up the gloomy picture of Southern school segregation, 16 years after *Brown*: "Despite some progress in Southern school desegregation . . . a substantial majority of black school children in the South still attend segregated schools."† Presumably, then, when a majority of Negro children attended schools in which whites were the majority, success by one measure should have been reported. But in its follow-up report one year later, this measure of success in Southern school desegregation was not even mentioned. The civil-rights enforcement effort in elementary and secondary schools, given a low "marginal" score for November 1970 (out of four possibilities, "poor," "marginal," "adequate," and "good"), is shown as having regressed to an even *lower* "marginal" score by May 1971, after HEW's most successful year in advancing school integration!

But from the point of view of civil-rights advocates, desegregation as such in the South is receding as a focus of attention. A second generation of problems has come increasingly to the fore: dismissal or demotion of black school principals and teachers as integration progresses and their jobs are to be given to whites; expulsions of black students for disciplinary reasons; the use of provocative symbols (the Confederate flag, the singing of "Dixie"); segregation within individual schools based on tests and ability grouping;

* In *Inequality in Education*, Center for Law and Education, Harvard University, Aug. 3, 1971.

† *Federal Civil Rights Enforcement Effort*, 1970, p. 14.

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and the rise of private schools in which whites can escape desegregation.

But alongside these new issues, there is the reality that the blacks of the North and West are also segregated, not to mention the Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, and others. The civil-rights movement sees that minorities are concentrated in schools that may be all or largely minority, sees an enormous agenda of desegregation before it, and cannot pause to consider a success which is already in its mind paltry and inconclusive. The struggle must still be fought, as bitterly as ever.

There is a second point of view as to why desegregation, despite its apparent success, is no success. This is the Southern point of view, and now increasingly the Northern point of view. It argues that a legitimate, moral, and Constitutional effort to eliminate the unconstitutional separation of the races (most Southerners now agree with this judgment of *Brown*), has been turned into something else—an intrusive, costly, painful, and futile effort to regroup the races in education by elaborate transportation schemes. The Southern Congressmen who for so long tried to get others to listen to their complaints now watch with grim satisfaction the agonies of Northern Congressmen faced with the crisis of mandatory, court-imposed transportation for desegregation. On the night of November 4, 1971, as a desperate House passed amendment after amendment in a futile effort to stop busing, Congressman Edwards of Alabama said:

> Mr. Chairman, this will come as a shock to some of my colleagues. I am opposing this amendment. I will tell you why. I look at it from a rather cold standpoint. We are busing all over the First District of Alabama, as far as you can imagine. Buses are everywhere . . . people say to me, "How in the world are we ever going to stop this madness?" I say, "It will stop the day it starts taking place across the country, in the North, in the East, in the West, and yes, even in Michigan."

And indeed, one of the amendments had been offered by Michigan Congressmen, long-time supporters of desegregation, because what had been decreed for Charlotte, North Carolina, Mobile, Alabama, and endless other Southern cities was now on the way to becoming law in Detroit and its suburbs.

As a massive wave of antagonism to transportation for desegregation sweeps the country, the liberal Congressmen and Democratic Presidential aspirants who have for so long fought for desegregation ask themselves whether there is any third point of view: whether they must join with the activists who say that the struggle is endless and they must not flag, even now; or whether they must join with the Southerners. To stand with the courts in their latest decisions is, for liberal Congressmen, political suicide. A Gallup survey last October revealed that 76 per cent of respondents opposed busing, almost as many in the East (71 per cent), Midwest (77 per cent), and West (72 per cent), as in the South (82 per cent); a majority of Muskie supporters (65 per cent) as well as a majority of Nixon supporters (85 per cent). Even more blacks oppose busing than support it (47 to 45 per cent). But if to stand with the further extension to all the Northern cities and suburbs of transportation for desegregation is suicide, how can the liberal Congressmen join with the South and with what they view as Northern bigotry in opposing busing? Is there a third position, something which responds to the wave of frustration at court orders, and which does not mean the abandonment of hope for an integrated society?

How have we come from a great national effort to repair a monstrous wrong to a situation in which the sense of right of great majorities is offended by policies which seem continuous with that once noble effort? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to be clear on how the Southern issue became a national issue.

After the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the first attempt of the South to respond to the massive federal effort to impose desegregation upon it was "freedom of choice." There still existed the black schools and the white schools of a dual school system. But now whites could go to black schools (none did) and the blacks could go to white schools (few dared). It was perfectly clear that throughout the South "freedom of choice" was a means of maintaining the dual school system. In 1966 HEW began the process of demanding statistical proof that substantially more blacks were going to school with whites each year. The screw was tightened regularly, by the courts and HEW, and finally, in 1968, the Supreme Court gave the *coup de grâce*, insisting that dual school systems be eliminated completely. There must henceforth be no identifiable black schools and white schools, only schools.

But one major issue remained as far as statistical desegregation was concerned: the large cities of the South. For the fact was that the degree of segregation in the big-city Southern schools was by now no longer simply attributable to the dual school systems they, too, had once maintained; in some instances, indeed, these schools had even been "satisfactorily" (by some federal or court standard) desegregated years before. What did it mean to say that their dual school systems must also be dismantled "forthwith"?

Contrast, as a concrete instance, the case of rural New Kent County in Virginia, where the Supreme Court declared in 1968 that "freedom of choice" would not be accepted as a means of desegregating a dual school system. Blacks and

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whites lived throughout the county. There were two schools, the historic black school and the historic white school. Under "freedom of choice," some blacks attended the white school, and no whites attended the black school. There was a simple solution to desegregation, here and throughout the rural and small-town South, and the Supreme Court insisted in 1968, fourteen years after *Brown,* that the school systems adopt it: to draw a line which simply made two school districts, one for the former black school, and one for the former white school, and to require all children in one district, white and black, to attend the former black school, and all children in the other, white and black, to attend the former white school.

But what now of Charlotte, Mobile, Nashville, and Norfolk? To draw geographical lines around the schools of these cities, which had been done, meant that many white schools remained all white, and many black schools remained all black. Some schools that had been "desegregated" in the past—that is, had experienced some mix of black and white—had already become "resegregated"—that is, largely black or all black as a result of population movements rather than any official action.

If there were to be no black schools and no white schools in the city, one thing at least was necessary: massive transportation of the children to achieve a proper mix. There was no solution in the form of geographical zoning.

But if this was the case, in what way was their situation different from that of Northern cities? In only one respect: the Southern cities had once had dual school systems, and the Northern cities had not. (Even this was not necessarily a decisive difference, for cities outside the Old South had also maintained dual systems until 1954. Indiana had a law permitting them until the late 1940's, and other cities had maintained dual systems somewhat earlier.) Almost everything else was the same. The dynamics of population change were the same. Blacks moved into the central city, whites moved out to the suburbs. Blacks were concentrated in certain areas, owing to a mixture of formal or informal residential discrimination, past or present, economic incapacity, and taste, and these areas of black population became larger and larger, making full desegregation by contiguous geographical zoning impossible. Even the political structures of Southern and Northern cities were becoming more alike. Southern blacks were voting, liberal candidates appealed to them, Southern blacks sat on city councils and school boards. If one required the full desegregation of Southern cities by busing, then why should one not require the full desegregation of Northern cities by busing?

Busing has often been denounced as a false issue. Until busing was decreed for the desegregation of Southern cities, it was. As has been pointed out again and again, buses in the South regularly carried black children past white schools to black schools, and white children past black schools to white schools. When "freedom of choice" failed to achieve desegregation and geographical zoning was imposed, busing sometimes actually declined. In any case, when the school systems were no longer allowed to have buses for blacks and buses for whites, certainly the busing system became more efficient. After 1970, busing for desegregation replaced the busing for segregation.

But this was not true when busing came to Charlotte, North Carolina, and many other cities of the South, in 1971, after the key Supreme Court decision in *Swann* v. *Charlotte-Mecklenburg County Board of Education.* The City of Charlotte is 64 square miles, larger than Washington, D.C., but it is a part of Mecklenburg County, with which it forms a single school district of 550 square miles, which is almost twice the size of New York City. Many other Southern cities (Mobile, Nashville, Tampa) also form part of exceptionally large school districts. While 29 per cent of the schoolchildren of Mecklenburg County are black, almost all live in Charlotte. Owing to the size of the county, 24,000 of 84,500 children were bused, for the purpose of getting children to schools beyond walking distance. School zones were formed geographically, and the issue was, could all-black and all-white schools exist in Mecklenburg County, if a principle of neighborhood school districting meant they would be so constituted?

The Supreme Court ruled they could not, and transportation could be used to eliminate black and white schools. The Court did not argue that there was a segregative intent in the creation of geographical zones—or that there was not—and referred to only one piece of evidence suggesting an effort to maintain segregation, free transfer. There are situations in which free transfer is used by white children to get out of mostly black schools, but if this had been the problem, the Court could have required a majority-to-minority transfer only (in which one can only transfer from a school in which one's race is a majority, and to a school in which one's race is a minority), as is often stipulated in desegregation plans. Instead the Court approved a plan which involved the busing of some 20,000 additional children, some for distances of up to 15 miles, from the center of the city to the outer limits of the county, and vice versa.

Two implications of the decision remain uncertain, but they may lead to a reorganization of all American education. If Charlotte, because it is part of the school district of Mecklenburg County, can be totally desegregated with each school having a roughly 71-29 white-black pro-

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portion, should not city boundaries be disregarded in other places and larger school districts of the Mecklenburg County scale be created wherever such action would make integration possible? A district judge has already answered this question in the affirmative for Richmond, Virginia.

But the second implication is: If Charlotte is —except for the background of a dual school system—socially similar to many Northern cities, and if radical measures can be prescribed to change the pattern that exists in Charlotte, should they not also be prescribed in the North? And to that question also a federal judge, ruling in a San Francisco case, has returned an affirmative answer.

San Francisco has a larger measure of integration probably than most Northern cities. Nevertheless *de facto* segregation—the segregation arising not from formal decisions to divide the races as in the South, but from other causes, presumed to be social and demographic—has long been an issue in San Francisco. In 1962, the NAACP filed suit against the school board, charging it with "affording, operating, and maintaining a racially segregated school system within the San Francisco Unified School District, contrary to and in violation of the equal protection and due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States." As John Kaplan has written:

> The history of this suit is a short and strange one. The Board of Education retained for its defense a distinguished local attorney, Joseph Alioto [now the mayor], who was primarily an anti-trust specialist. Alioto started discovery proceedings and the heart seemed to go out of the plaintiffs.
>
> In any case, after admitting in depositions that the Board had no intention to produce a condition of racial imbalance; that it took no steps to bring about such a condition; that its lines were not drawn for the purpose of creating or maintaining racial imbalance; that there was no gerrymandering; and finally that the Board was under no obligation to relieve the situation by transporting students from their neighborhoods to other districts, the plaintiffs' attorney allowed the suit to be dismissed for want of prosecution on December 2, 1964.

It was assumed that this disposed of the legal issue. Meanwhile the San Francisco school system continued to struggle with the problem. After a long series of censuses, disputes, and studies, the school board proposed to set up two new integrated complexes, using transportation to integrate, one North and one South of Golden Gate Park. They were to open in 1970. When, however, one was postponed because of money problems, suit was brought once again by integration-minded parents, this time charging *de jure* segregation on the ground that the school board's failure to implement the two integrated school complexes amounted to an official act maintaining the schools in their presently segregated state.

Judge Stanley Weigel, before whom the matter was argued, very sensibly decided to wait for the Supreme Court's ruling in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg County case which, he and many others thought, might once and for all settle the question of whether *de facto* segregation was no less unconstitutional than *de jure* segregation. Although one may doubt from certain passages in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg decision that the Supreme Court did indeed mean to outlaw *de facto* segregation, Judge Weigel seems to have decided that it did. "The law is settled," he declared, "that school authorities violate the constitutional rights of children by establishing school attendance boundary lines knowing that the result is to continue or increase substantial racial imbalance."

But in ordering the desegregation of the San Francisco schools by transportation, Judge Weigel did not simply rest the matter on *de facto* segregation; he also listed acts of commission and omission which he believed amounted to *de jure* school segregation.

Now one can well imagine that a school board which does not or did not recently operate under state laws that required or permitted segregation could nevertheless through covert acts—which are equally acts under state authority—foster segregation. It could, for example, change school-zone lines, so as to confine black children in one school and permit white children to go to another school. It could build schools and expand them so that they served an all-black or all-white population. It could permit a transfer policy whereby white children could escape from black schools while blacks could not. It could assign black teachers to black schools and white teachers to white schools.

Judge Weigel charged all these things. The record—a record made by a liberal school board, appointed by a liberal mayor, in a liberal city, with a black president of the school board—does not, in this layman's opinion, bear him out, unless one is to argue that any action of a school board in construction policy or zone-setting or teacher assignment that precedes a situation in which there are some almost all-black schools (there were no all-black schools in San Francisco) and some almost all-white schools (there were no all-white schools in San Francisco) can be considered *de jure* segregation.

Under Judge Weigel's interpretation, there is no such thing as *de facto* segregation. All racial imbalance is the result of state actions, either taken or not taken. If not taken, they should have been taken. *De facto* disappears as a category requiring any less action than *de jure*.

This is the position of many lawyers who are arguing these varied cases. I have described the San Francisco case because it led to a legal order

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requiring desegregation by transportation of the largest Northern or Western system so far affected by such an order. But massive desegregation had also been required by a district judge in Denver, who had then had his judgment limited by the Circuit Court of Appeals. It is this Denver case that will become the first case on Northern or Western *de facto* school segregation—if we still allow the term some meaning—to be heard by the Supreme Court. What the Supreme Court will have to decide is whether the historical difference between Charlotte and Denver permits Denver or any other city to do any less than Charlotte has been required to do in order to integrate its schools.

Simultaneously, Detroit and the surrounding counties and the state of Michigan are under court order to come up with a plan that permits the desegregation of the schoolchildren of Detroit by busing to the neighboring suburbs, and a federal judge is moving toward the same result in Indianapolis. If the Supreme Court should uphold the district judge's ruling in the Richmond case, it will then similarly have to decide whether anything in the history or practices of Detroit and Indianapolis justifies ordering less in those cities than has been ordered in the city of Richmond.

The hardy band of civil-rights lawyers now glimpses—or glimpsed, before the two latest appointments to the Supreme Court—a complete victory, based on the idea that there is no difference between *de facto* and *de jure* segregation, an idea which is itself based on the larger idea that there is no difference between North and South. What is imposed on the South must be imposed on the North. As Ramsey Clark, a former Attorney-General of the United States, puts it, echoing a widely shared view:

> In fact, there is no *de facto* segregation. All segregation reflects some past actions of our governments. The FHA itself required racially restrictive covenants until 1948. But, that aside, the consequences of segregated schooling are the same whatever the cause. Segregated schools are inherently unequal however they come to be and the law must prohibit them whatever the reason for their existence.

In other words, whatever exists is the result of state action. If what exists is wrong, state action must undo it. If segregated schools were not made so by official decisions directly affecting the schools, then they were made so by other official decisions—Clark, for example, points to an FHA policy in effect until 1948—that encouraged residential segregation. Behind this argument rests the assumption, now part of the liberal creed, that racism in the North is different, if at all, from racism in the South only in being more hypocritical. All segregation arises from the same evil causes, and all segregation must be struck down. This is the position that many federal judges are now taking in the North—even if, as Judge Weigel did, they try to protect themselves by pointing to *some* action by the school board that they think might make the situation *de jure* in the earlier sense as well.

II

I BELIEVE that three questions are critical here. First, do basic human rights, as guaranteed by the Constitution, require that the student population of every school be racially balanced according to some specified proportion, and that no school be permitted a black majority? Second, whether or not this is required by the Constitution, is it the only way to improve the education of black children? Third, whether or not this is required by the Constitution, and whether or not it improves the education of black children, is it the only way to improve relations between the races?

These questions are in practice closely linked. What the Court decides is constitutional is very much affected by what it thinks is good for the nation. If it thinks that the education of black children can only be improved in schools with black minorities, it will be very much inclined to see situations in which there are schools with black majorities as unconstitutional. If it thinks race relations can only be improved if all children attend schools which are racially balanced, it will be inclined to find constitutional a requirement to have racial balance.

This is not to say that the courts do not need authority in the Constitution for what they decide. But this authority is broad indeed and it depends on a doctrine of judicial restraint—which has not been characteristic of the Supreme Court and subordinate federal courts in recent years—to limit judges in demanding what they think is right as well as what they believe to be within the Constitution. Indeed, it was in part because the Supreme Court believed that Negro children *were* being deprived educationally that it ruled as it did in *Brown*. They were being deprived because the schools were very far from "separate and equal." But even if they were "equal," their being "separate" would have been sufficient to make them unconstitutional: "To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications simply because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their race and status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

While much has been made of the point that the Court ruled as it did because of the evidence and views of social scientists as to the effects of segregation on the capacity of black children to learn, the fact is that the basis of the decision was that distinctions by race had no place in American law and public practice, neither in the schools, nor, as subsequent rulings asserted, in

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any other area, whether in waiting rooms or golf courses. This was clearly a matter of the "equal protection of the laws." It was more problematic as to what should be done to insure the "equal protection of the laws" when such protection had been denied for so long by dual school systems. But remedies were eventually agreed upon, and the Court has continued to rule unanimously—as it did in *Brown*—on these remedies down through *Swann* v. *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*.

Inevitably, however, the resulting increase in the freedom of black children—the freedom to attend the schools they wished—entailed a restriction on the freedom of others. In "freedom of choice," the freedom of white children was in no way limited. In geographical zoning to achieve integration, it was limited, but no more than that of black children. But in busing to distant schools, white children were in effect being conscripted to create an environment which, it had been decided, was required to provide equality of educational opportunity for black children. It was perhaps one thing to do this when the whites in question were the children or grandchildren of those who had deprived black children of their freedom in the past. But when a district judge in San Francisco ruled that not only white children but Chinese children and Spanish-speaking children must be conscripted to create an environment which, he believed, would provide equality of educational opportunity for black children, there was good reason for wondering whether "equal protection of the laws" was once again being violated, this time from the other side.

We are engaged here in a great enterprise to determine what the "equal protection of the laws" should concretely mean in a multi-racial and multi-ethnic society, and one in which various groups have suffered differing measures of deprivation. The blacks have certainly suffered the most, but the Chinese have suffered too, as have the Spanish-speaking groups, and some of the white ethnic groups. Is it "equal protection of the laws" to prevent Chinese-American children from attending nearby schools in their own community, conveniently adjacent to the afternoon schools they also attend? Is it "equal protection of the laws" to keep Spanish-speaking children from attending school in which their numerical dominance has led to bilingual classes and specially trained teachers? Can the Constitution possibly mean that?

One understands that the people do not vote on what the Constitution means. The judges decide. But it is one thing for the Constitution to say that, despite how the majority feels, it must allow black children into the public schools of their choice; and it is quite another for the Constitution to say, in the words of its interpreters, that some children, owing to their race or ethnic group alone, may not be allowed to attend the schools of their choice, even if their choice has nothing to do with the desire to discriminate racially. When, starting with the first proposition, one ends up with the second, as one has in San Francisco, one wonders if the Constitution can possibly have been interpreted correctly.

Again and again, reading the briefs and the transcripts and the analyses, one finds the words "escape" and "flee." The whites must not escape. They must not flee. Constitutional law often moves through strange and circuitous paths, but perhaps the strangest yet has been the one whereby, beginning with an effort to expand freedom—no Negro child shall be excluded from any public school because of his race—the law has ended up with as drastic a restriction of freedom as we have seen in this country in recent years. No child, of any race or group, may "escape" or "flee" the experience of integration. No school district may facilitate such an escape. Nor may it even (in the Detroit decision) fail to take action to close the loopholes permitting anyone to escape.

Let me suggest that, even though the civil-rights lawyers may feel that in advocating measures like these they are in the direct line of *Brown*, something very peculiar has happened when the main import of an argument changes from an effort to expand freedom to an effort to restrict freedom. Admittedly the first effort concerned the freedom of blacks, the second in large measure concerns the freedom of whites (but not entirely, as we have seen from the many instances in the South where blacks have resisted the elimination of black schools, and in the North where they have fought for community-controlled schools). Nevertheless, the tone of civil-rights cases has turned from one in which the main note is the expansion of freedom, into one in which the main note is the imposition of restrictions. It is ironic to read in Judge Stanley Weigel's decision, following which every child in the San Francisco elementary schools was placed in one of four ethnic or racial categories and made subject to transportation to provide an average mix of each in every school, an approving quotation from Judge Skelly Wright:

> The problem of changing a people's mores, particularly those with an emotional overlay, is not to be taken lightly. It is a problem which will require the utmost patience, understanding, generosity, and forbearance from all of us, of whatever race. But the principle is that we are, all of us, freeborn Americans, with a right to make our way, unfettered by sanctions imposed by man because of the work of God.

That was the language of 1956. One finds very little "patience, understanding," etc., in Judge Weigel's own decision, which required the San

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Francisco School District to prepare a plan to meet the following objectives:

> Full integration of all public elementary schools so that the ratio of black children to white children will then be and thereafter continue to be substantially the same in each school. To accomplish these objectives the plans may include:
>
> a. Use of non-discriminatory busing if, as appears now to be clear, at least some busing will be necessary for compliance with the law.
>
> b. Changing attendance zones whenever necessary to head off racial segregation.

According to Judge Weigel, the law even requires:

> Avoidance of the use of tracking systems or other educational techniques or innovations without provision for safeguard against racial segregation as a consequence.

Can all this be in the Constitution too?

A SECOND issue that would seem to have some constitutional bearing is whether those who are to provide the children for a minority black environment are being conscripted only on the basis of income. The prosperous and the rich can avail themselves of private schooling, or they can "flee" to the suburbs. And if the Richmond and Detroit rulings should be sustained, making it impossible to "escape" by going to the suburbs, the class character of the decisions would become even more pronounced. For while many working-class and lower-middle class people can afford to live in suburbs, very few can afford the costs of private education.

Some observers have pointed out that leading advocates of transportation for integration—journalists, political figures, and judges—themselves send their children to private schools which escape the consequences of these legal decisions. But even without being *ad hominem,* one may raise a moral question: if the judges who are imposing such decisions, the lawyers who argue for them (including brilliant young lawyers from the best law schools employed by federal poverty funds to do the arguing), would not themselves send their children to the schools their decisions bring into being, how can they insist that others poorer and less mobile than they are do so? Clearly those not subject to a certain condition are insisting that others submit themselves to it, which offends the basic rule of morality in both the Jewish and Christian traditions. I assume there must be a place for this rule in the Constitution.

A key constitutional question with which the Supreme Court will now finally have to do deal is whether *de facto* segregation is really different from *de jure* segregation, and if so, whether lesser remedies can be required to eradicate it.

Is there really a meaningful difference between a 100 per-cent black school under a law that prohibits blacks from going to school with whites, and a 100 per-cent black school that is created by residential segregation? The question has become even subtler: is there a difference between a majority black school in a city which once had *de jure* segregation, and such a school in a city which did not? I believe that the answer to the second question is no. But in the first case the distinction was meaningful when the Supreme Court handed down *Brown* and is meaningful today. In the *de facto* situation, to begin with, not all schools are 100 per cent segregated. Indeed, none may be. A child's observation alone may demonstrate that there are many opportunities to attend integrated schools. The family may have an opportunity to move, the city may have open enrollment, it may have a voluntary city-to-suburb busing program. The child may conclude that if one's parents wished, one could attend another school, or that one could if one lived in another neighborhood—not all are inaccessible economically or because of discrimination —or could conclude that the presence of a few whites indicated that the school was not segregated.

Admittedly social perception is a complicated thing. The child in a 100 per-cent black school as a result of residential concentration and strict zoning may see his situation as identical to that of a child in a 100 per-cent black school because of state law requiring separation of the races. But the fact is that a black child in a school more than 47 per-cent black (the San Francisco definition of "segregation") may also see himself as unfairly deprived. Or any black child at all, in view of his history, and the currently prevailing interpretation of his position, even if he is the only black child in a white school, may so conclude. Perception is not only based on reality, a reality which to me makes the *de facto* segregated school a very different thing from the *de jure* segregated school. Perception can turn the lovely campuses of the West Coast into "jails" which confine young people, and can turn those incarcerated by courts for any crime into political prisoners. If we feel a perception is wrong, one of our duties is to try to correct it, rather than to assume that the perception of being a victim must alone dictate the action to be taken. False perceptions are to be responded to sympathetically, but not as if they were true.

If one finds segregation of apparently *de facto* origin, what is the proper remedy?

In some cases, one can show that it is not really *de facto* by pointing to actions that the school board took with a segregatory intent—for example, changing a school-zone line when blacks moved into an area to keep a school all or mostly black or another one all or mostly white. I do not think this was demonstrated in the case of San Francisco, but it was the crucial issue in the first Northern school desegregation case, that of

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New Rochelle, which was never reviewed by the Supreme Court, and in Pontiac, Michigan, and for some schools in Denver. In districts with a hundred or more schools and a long history, with perhaps scores of school-zone lines changed every year, it would be unlikely if one could not come up with some cases that seemed to show this. Sometimes it was done under pressure of local white parents. Finding this, a court might require something as simple as that the zone line be changed back (this, of course, by the time it came to court would hardly matter since the black residential area would almost certainly have expanded and both zone lines would probably be irrelevant). Or it might require that no zone line be set in the future which had the effect of maintaining segregation. Or that no parental wishes of this sort be taken into account. In cases where segregatory zone lines were commonly or regularly set (Pontiac) more radical relief would be more appropriate.

But there is a basic and troubling question here. School boards are either elected, or appointed by elected officials. They are thus directly or indirectly responsible to citizens. One can well understand the constitutional doctrine which asserts that no elected or appointed board, no governmental official, may deny constitutional rights—e.g., allowing a Communist to speak in a school building—regardless of the wishes of its constituency. But in the case of schooling and school-zone boundary-setting, a host of issues is involved: convenience of access, quality of building, assumed quality of teaching staff, racial composition of students, etc. A board is subject to a hundred influences in making such a decision. It is not as simple a matter as proving this Communist was not allowed to speak because of mass pressure. Nor is the motivation of parents and boards ever unmixed.

In Boston, the school board opened a new school in a black section. It tried to save the state aid that would be lost if it did not take some action to desegregate, and it zoned children living at some distance away into the new school. The white parents protested and eventually the board succumbed to their pressure and allowed them to send their children to their old nearby schools. To the minds of most enforcers of school desegregation, state and national, the board condemned itself for a segregatory act. One of the things the boycotting parents said was that they were afraid their children would get beaten up going through the area they had to traverse in order to get to school. Who is to say that this was pure fantasy, in the conditions of the modern city, and that what the white parents really meant was that they did not want their children to go to a mostly black school? It is this kind of determination on the intent and effect of hundreds of school-board decisions that judges are now required to make. When one reads cases such as those in Indianapolis, Detroit, and elsewhere, the mind reels with the complexity of numerous school-zoning and construction decisions. Briefs, hearing transcripts, exhibits run to thousands of pages. And at least one conclusion that this reader comes to is that no judge can or ought to have to make decisions on such issues, and the chances are that whatever decision he makes will be based on inadequately analyzed information.

Is it the law—and, not being a lawyer, I do not know—that if a segregatory intent plays *any* part in school decisions, then *every* measure of relief, no matter how extensive, is justified? If so, from a non-legal point of view it seems odd that one uncertain act with an uncertain effect on the social and racial patterns of an entire city should justify massive measures to reconstruct a school system.

PERHAPS THE most serious constitutional issue in a line of cases erasing the distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* segregation and also erasing the political boundaries between school districts in order to achieve a racial balance in which every black student is in a minority in every school (and presumably, as the cases develop, every Spanish-speaking student, and so on), is that all this makes impossible one kind of organization that a democratic society may wish to choose for its schools: the kind of organization in which the schools are the expression of a geographically defined community of small scale and regulated in accordance with the democratically expressed views of that community. This is the point Alexander Bickel has argued so forcefully. We have had a good deal of discussion in recent years of "decentralization," "community control," and "parental control" of schools. There were reasons for "community control" long before the issue exploded in New York in the late 1960's, and there were reasons for "parental control" long before the educational voucher scheme was proposed. Now the new line of cases makes the school ever more distant from the community in which it is located and from the parents who send their children to it.

While busing schemes vary, in some, children from a number of different areas are sent to a single school and children from one area are sent to a number of schools. It becomes hard for parental or community concerns to be exercised on the particular school to which one's children go. Thus, in San Francisco, in the Mission district, owing to the effective work of the Mission Coalition (an Alinsky-style community organization), the local community has considerable influence on public programs in the area. With a wide base of membership, this organization can help determine what is most effective in the local schools. But if it wants to create an atmosphere

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in the school best suited to the education of Spanish-speaking children, what sense does this make when the schools are filled with children from distant areas? And how can it influence the education the Mission children receive in the distant schools to which many of them are now sent?

In effect, the new line of cases gives enormous control to central school bureaucracies, who will make decisions subject only to the courts and the federal government on the one hand, and the mass opinion of a large area dominated by the inevitable slogans which can create majorities on the other. Clearly this is one way of reducing the influence of people over their own environment and their own fate. I believe indeed that the worst effect of the current crisis is that people already reduced to frustration by their inability to affect a complex society and a government moving in ways many of them find incomprehensible and undesirable, must now see one of the last areas of local influence taken from them in order to achieve a single goal, that of racial balance.

The one reason for community control that has recently been considered most persuasive is that the inadequate education of black children may be improved under a greater measure of black community control. This may or may not be the case, but I believe that all people, black and white, have the right to control as much of their lives as is possible in a complex society, and the schools are very likely the only major function of government which would not suffer—and might even benefit—from a greater measure of local control. In education, there are few "economies of scale." It has always seemed fantastic that educators, in proposing "complexes" for 20,000 elementary-school children for purposes of desegregation, could also argue that schools of that size would also be more "efficient." Interestingly, lawyers and judges, in their effort to find *de jure* segregatory intent in the acts of Northern school boards, will sometimes claim that schools were deliberately made small to lessen the chances of integration. Thus in Detroit, one charge against the school board, accepted by Judge Roth, was that the board built small schools of 300 in order to contain the population and make desegregation more difficult. Paul Goodman and many others would argue that even schools of 300 are probably too large. In San Francisco, on the other hand, the argument was that schools were expanded to "contain" the black and white population. The Detroit judge, it seems, would have preferred the large San Francisco schools, and the San Francisco judge would have preferred the small Detroit schools, if one takes their arguments at face value. But one may be allowed to suspect that if the situations had been reversed, they would still both have found "*de jure*" segregation in their respective cities.

One consequence of this transfer of power to the center when one transports for racial balance is that there is no local pressure to build a school to serve a local population, since one cannot know what the effect of any local school will be. Thus all decisions on school building revert to the hands of the central school authorities, only affected, as I have already pointed out, by judges and the federal government on the one hand, and a mass opinion unrelated to local district needs on the other. I am skeptical as to whether this will improve school-construction policies. Federal civil-rights agencies and judges have not as yet shown themselves very perceptive in their criticism of local school-construction policies. One piece of evidence of *de jure* segregation, cited by the San Francisco judge, was the building of a new school in Hunter's Point, a black area. The school authorities had resisted building there. The local people insisted on a new school. Just about everyone who supports desegregation in San Francisco supported the local people, even though they knew that the school would be segregated. The local NAACP also supported the building of the new school. The judge, in his decision, cited the building of this school as a sign of the "segregatory" policies of the San Francisco school authorities. To the judge, the black people of Hunter's Point were being "contained," when they should have been sent off elsewhere, leaving their own area devoid of schools (or perhaps any other facilities). But for the people of the area who demanded the school, they were being served. That their school would be, to a federal judge's mind, "segregated" did not seem to them a good reason for all city facilities to be built only in white or Spanish-speaking or Chinese areas.

The attempt of judges and civil-rights lawyers to argue that this or that school was built to be "segregated" for whites or blacks is in any case often naive. The dynamics of population movements in the cities have been too rapid (the black population of San Francisco increased from 5,000 in 1940 to 96,000 in 1970) and the process of school-building too slow, for any such intention to be easily demonstrated or realized in Northern cities. One of the schools cited in the San Francisco case as "segregated" black (64 per-cent black in 1964), had been cited as recently as 1967 in the Civil Rights Commission's report on *Racial Isolation in the Public Schools* as having been built in order to foster the "segregation" of whites, since it had opened in 1954 with a student body that was almost all white. Presumably, at least for the intervening period, it must have been integrated.

The crucial point is: do federal courts have the right to impose a school policy that would deprive local communities and groups, white and black, of power over their schools? Some of them seem quite sure that they do. Judge Roth in

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Detroit is critical of the blacks of that city for contributing to what he considers "segregation" by demanding black principals and teachers:

> In the most realistic sense, if fault or blame is to be found it is that of the community as a whole, including of course the black components. We need not minimize the effect of the actions of federal, state, and local governmental officers and agencies . . . to observe that blacks, like ethnic groups in the past, have tended to separate from the larger group and associate together. The ghetto is a place of confinement and a place of refuge. There is enough blame for everyone to share.

We would all agree with Judge Roth that the ghetto must not be a place of confinement and that everything possible must be done to make it as easy for blacks to live where they wish as it is for anyone else. But why should it be the duty or the right of the federal government and the federal judiciary to destroy the ghetto as a place of refuge if that is what some blacks want? Judge Roth is trying to read into the Constitution the crude Americanizing and homogenizing which is certainly one part of the American experience, but which is just as certainly not the main way we in this country have responded to the facts of a multi-ethnic society. The doctrines to which Judge Roth lends his authority would deny not only to blacks, but to any other group, a right of refuge which is quite properly theirs in a multi-ethnic society built on democratic and pluralist principles.

I DO NOT speak here of limiting what communities may freely choose to do in order to integrate their schools. I speak only of the judicial insistence that they *must* do certain things. Much busing for desegregation is engaged in by school boards independently of court decisions, because the board feels this is good for education; or because it is under pressure from blacks and white liberal citizens who demand such measures; or because it is required or is under pressure to do so from state education authorities—who, in the major Northern and Western states, and in particular in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and California, require local school districts to eliminate racial imbalance defined in various ways. More than 50 per-cent black is racial imbalance in Massachusetts, and 15 per-cent more or less of each group in each school than the proportion of that group in the entire district is racial imbalance in California. (It was on the basis of the 15 per-cent rule that more than 47 per-cent black was considered segregated in San Francisco, for the proportion of black students in the schools was 32 per cent.) Thus, the City of Berkeley has been transporting its children to achieve integration for three years now, without any court or federal action. Riverside has done the same. Many cities have implemented, independently of court action, some degree of transportation for integration. Many of these actions have been attacked in the courts from the other side—that is, by white parents charging that for racial reasons alone they were being assigned to schools far from their homes. All these challenges have been struck down in the courts, in spite of state laws (such as New York's) which declare transportation for desegregation illegal. Interestingly enough, while the San Francisco school board was under attack from one side for having failed to implement one of its integration-through-busing school complexes, it was under attack from the other side for having implemented the one it had. It was of course the first of the two attacks that was supported by the district judge.

It is not this kind of action-to-integrate—undertaken by elected school boards, or by school boards appointed by elected officials, for educational or political reasons—that is under discussion here. Unless a political decision is clearly unconstitutional it should stand. Indeed, it is very likely that decisions to achieve racial balance taken by school boards not under judicial or federal order but because the political forces in that district demand it, have better effects than those undertaken under court order by resentful school administrations. In the first case, the methods of reducing racial imbalance have been worked out through the processes of political give-and-take, the community and teachers and administrators have been prepared for the change by the political process, the parents who oppose it have lost in what they themselves consider a fair fight. The characteristics of judge-imposed decisions are quite different.

III

THERE is, then, considerable room for doubt as to whether the Constitution actually mandates a system whereby every school shall have a black minority and no school shall have a black majority. Nevertheless present-day judges, with whom the doctrine of judicial restraint is not especially popular, seem able to find constitutional warrant for whatever policies they feel are best for the society. And so we come to the other crucial questions raised by the new line of cases: Is school desegregation the only way to improve the education of black children and/or the relations between the races?

Without rehearsing the terrible facts in detail, we know that blacks finish high school in the North three or more years behind whites in achievement. We also know with fair confidence that this huge gap is not caused by differential expenditures of money. Just about as much is spent on predominantly black schools outside the South as on predominantly white ones. Classes in black schools will often be smaller than classes

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in white ones—because the black schools tend to be located in old areas with many school buildings, while white schools tend to be in newer areas with fewer and more crowded school buildings. Blacks will often have more professional personnel assigned, owing to various federal and other programs. There are, to be sure, lower teacher salaries in the predominantly black schools, because they usually have younger teachers with less seniority and fewer degrees. Anyone who believes this is a serious disadvantage for a teacher has a faith in experience and degrees which is justified by no known evidence. (It is quite true that the big cities spend much less on their schools, white and black, than the surrounding suburban areas, which are almost entirely white. Regardless of the fact that spending more is unlikely to do much to improve education—it tends mostly to improve teachers' salaries and fringe benefits—it is quite unconscionable that more public money should be spent on the education of those from prosperous backgrounds than on those from poorer families. But this is quite separate from the issue of whether within present school districts less is spent on the education of black children, and whether spending more would reduce the gap in achievement.)

If money is not the decisive element in the gap between white and black, what is? In 1966 the Coleman report on *Equality of Educational Opportunity* reviewed the achievement of hundreds of thousands of American school children, black and white, and related it to social and economic background, to various factors within the schools, and to integration. In 1967, another study, *Racial Isolation in the Public Schools,* analyzed the effects of compensatory-education programs and reviewed the data on integration. Both studies—as well as subsequent experience and research—suggested that if anything could be counted on to affect the education of black children, it was integration. However, the operative element was not race but social class. The conclusion of the Coleman report still seems the best statement of the case:

> . . . the apparent beneficial effect of a student body with a high proportion of white students comes not from racial composition per se, but from the better educational background and higher educational aspirations that are, on the average, found among white students.

On the other hand, if such integration did have an effect, it was not very great. The most intense reanalysis of Coleman's data* concludes:

> Our findings on the school racial composition issue, then, are mixed . . . the initial *Equality of Educational Opportunity* survey overstressed the impact of school social class. . . . When the issue is probed at grade 6, a small independent effect of schools' racial composition appeared, but its significance for educational policy seems slight.

The study of these issues has reached a Talmudic complexity. The finding that integration of different socioeconomic groups favors the achievement of lower socioeconomic groups apparently stands up, but the effect is not large. One thing, however, does seem clear: integrating the hapless and generally lower-income whites of the central city with lower-income blacks, particularly under conditions of resentment and conflict, as in San Francisco, is likely to achieve nothing, in educational terms.

In San Francisco, the number of children enrolled in elementary schools dropped 6,519 against a projected drop of 1,508 (a 13 per cent decline against a projected 3 per cent decline) in response to Judge Weigel's decision. The junior-high-school enrollment, not yet subjected to full-scale busing, declined only 1 per cent, and high-school enrollment remained the same. In Pasadena, California, there was a 22 per cent drop in the number of white students in the school system between 1969—before court-imposed busing—and 1971. In Norfolk, Virginia, court-imposed busing brought a drop of 20 per cent. If, as seems probable, it is the somewhat better-off and more mobile who leave the public-school system when busing is imposed, the effect on the achievement of black children is further reduced.

It is in response to such facts as these and in the light of such findings as Coleman's that judges in Detroit and Indianapolis and elsewhere now call for combining the central city and the suburb into unified school districts. But if this elaborate reorganization of the schools is being undertaken so that the presumed achievement-raising effect of socioeconomic integration may occur, we are likely to be cruelly disappointed. There is little if any encouragement to be derived from studies, published and unpublished, of voluntary busing programs even though such busing takes place under the most favorable circumstances (with motivated volunteers, from motivated families, and with schools acting freely and enthusiastically). Indeed, much integration through transportation has been so disappointing in terms of raising achievement that it may well lead to a revaluation of the earlier research whose somewhat tenuous results raised what begin to look like false hopes as to the educational effects of socioeconomic integration.

IV

THERE is yet a final argument. One will hear it in Berkeley, which underwent full desegregation by busing three years ago,

* David K. Cohen, Thomas F. Pettigrew, and Robert S. Riley, "Race and the Outcomes of Schooling," in Frederick Mosteller and Daniel P. Moynihan, eds., *On Equality of Educational Opportunity*, Random House, 546 pp., $15.00.

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and which has seen no particular reduction of the white-black achievement gap. The argument is that school integration will improve relations between the races and that in view of the extremity of interracial tensions in this country, anything that improves these relations must be done. In Berkeley, a liberal community with an elected school board which voluntarily introduced transportation for racial balance and was not turned out for doing so, one can perhaps make this argument. But race relations are not ideal even in Berkeley, as Senator Mondale's committee discovered last year when it conducted hearings there on the most successful American case of racial balance through transportation.

The Mondale committee discovered, for example, that after the schools were fully integrated, a special program for blacks—Black House—was established at the high-school level from which non-black students and teachers were excluded. (Berkeley High School, the only one in the city, has always been integrated.) The committee discovered, when it spoke to students—selected, one assumes, by the school authorities because they would give the best picture of integration—that students of different groups had little to do with one another. The black president of the senior class said: ". . . the only true existence of integration of Berkeley High is in the hallways when the bell rang everybody, you know, pass [*sic*] through the hallways, that is the only time I see true integration in Berkeley High." Senator Brooke probed deeper. Since the young man was black and a majority of his classmates were white, had they not voted for him? "The whites didn't even participate in voting. . . . They felt the student government was a farce." (The opposing candidate was also black.) What about social activities? "Like we have dances, if there is a good turnout you see two or three whites at the dances. . . ." Intramural sports? "The basketball team is pretty integrated, the crew team is mainly white, soccer team mainly white, tennis team mainly white." Did this mean, Senator Brooke asked, "that blacks don't go out for these teams that are white and whites don't go out for those teams that are all black?" The class president guessed that "whites like to play tennis and blacks like to play basketball better." Still, he did think integration was a good idea, as did a Japanese girl who told the Senators: "I think like the Asian kids at Berkeley High go around with Asian kids."

A Chicano student testified:

> I think the integration plan is working, started to work in junior high, it is different levels, the sixth graders go up to seventh grade now. I think now the Chicanos and blacks, they do hang around in groups. Usually some don't, I admit, like I myself hang around with all Chicanos but I am not prejudiced. I do it because I grew up with them, because they were my school buddies when there were segregated schools.

A black girl in elementary school said: "About integration, I don't think it is too integrated, but it is pretty well integrated. I have a lot of white friends. . . ." She lives in an integrated neighborhood. A white girl from the high school testified:

> Integration, ideally, as far as I can see it isn't working. I mean like as far as everybody doing things together . . . I have one class where there are only two whites in it, I being one of them, you know, like I don't have any problems there, but outside . . . [with other blacks] we just do different things. I am not interested in games. I couldn't care less. I don't know anything about Berkeley as far as the athletics go. . . . I wear very short skirts and walking down the halls I get hassled enough by all the black Dukes, you know. . . .

Senator Brooke was surprised she wasn't hassled by the white boys too and suggested that they might use a different technique.

This is about the most positive report one can make on school integration. Why should anyone be surprised? There is a good deal of hanging around in groups, and there is some contact across racial lines, but the groups seem to have different interests and different social styles. The younger children have more in common than the older ones. It would be hard to say whether this commonality of interest will continue through high school—a popular Berkeley theory—or whether differences will assert themselves as the children grow older even though they were exposed to integration earlier than those now in high school. In other communities which have been studied, black children who are bused tend to become more anti-white than those who are not bused. One can think of a number of reasons for this.

If, then, the judges are moving toward a forcible reorganization of American education because they believe this will improve relations between the races, they are acting neither on evidence nor on experience but on faith. And in so acting on faith they are pushing against many legitimate interests: the interest in using tax money for education rather than transportation; the interest of the working and lower-middle classes in attending schools near their homes; the interest of all groups, including black groups, in developing some measure of control over the institutions which affect their lives; the interest of all people in retaining freedom of choice wherever this is possible.

THERE IS unfortunately a widespread feeling, strong among liberals who have fought so long against the evil of racial segregation, that to stop now—before busing and expanded school districts are imposed on every city in the country—would be to betray the strug-

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gle for an integrated society. They are quite wrong. They have been misled by the professionals and specialists—in this instance, the government officials, the civil-rights lawyers, and the judges—as to what integration truly demands, and how it is coming about. Professionals and specialists inevitably overreach themselves, and there is no exception here.

It would be a terrible error to consider opposition to the recent judicial decisions on school integration as a betrayal of the promise of *Brown*. The promise of *Brown* is being realized. Black children may not be denied admittance to any school on account of their race (except for the cases in which courts and federal officials insist that they are to be denied admittance to schools with a black majority simply because they are black). The school systems of the South are desegregated. But more than that, integration in general has made enormous advances since 1954. It has been advanced by the hundreds of thousands of blacks in Northern and Western colleges. It has been advanced by the hundreds of thousands of blacks who have moved into professional and white-collar jobs in government, in the universities, in the school systems, in business. It has been advanced by the steady rise in black income which offers many blacks the opportunity to live in integrated areas. Most significantly, it has been advanced because millions of blacks now vote—in the South as well as the North—and because hundreds of blacks have been elected to school committees, city councils, state legislatures, the Congress. This is what is creating an integrated society in the United States.

We are far from this necessary and desirable goal. It would be a tragedy if the progress we made in achieving integration in the 1960's were not continued through the 70's. We can now foresee within a reasonable time the closing of many gaps between white and black. But I doubt that mandatory transportation of schoolchildren for integration will advance this process.

For, so far as the schools in particular are concerned, the increase in black political power means that blacks—like all other groups—can now negotiate, on the basis of their own power, and to the extent of their own power, over what kind of school systems should exist, and involving what measure of transportation and racial balance. In the varied settings of American life there will be many different answers to these questions. What Berkeley has done is not what New York City has done, and there is no reason why it should be. But everywhere black political power is present and contributing to the development of solutions.

There is a third path for liberals now agonized between the steady imposition of racial and ethnic group quotas on every school in the country—a path of pointlessly expensive and destructive homogenization—and surrender to the South. It is a perfectly sound American path, one which assumes that groups are different and will have their own interests and orientations, but which insists that no one be penalized because of group membership, and that a common base of experience be demanded of all Americans. It is the path that made possible the growth of the parochial schools, not as a challenge to a common American society, but as one variant within it. It is a path that, to my mind, legitimizes such developments as community control of schools and educational vouchers permitting the free choice of schools. There are as many problems in working out the details of this path as of the other two, but it has one thing to commend it as against the other two: it expands individual freedom, rather than restricts it.

One understands that the Constitution sets limits to the process of negotiation and bargaining even in a multi-racial and multi-ethnic setting. But the judges have gone far beyond what the Constitution can reasonably be thought to allow or require in the operation of this complex process. The judges should now stand back, and allow the forces of political democracy in a pluralist society to do their proper work.

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He Said, She Said

Leslie H. Farber

In its efforts to redress sexual, social, political, economic, artistic, and religious inequalities, the new feminism has thrown into question all those institutions under whose auspices men and women through the centuries have sought to combine their lots or join their fates. Marriage, the family, child-bearing and child-rearing, even the man-woman thing itself, are being subjected to such harsh scrutiny and challenge that it is now difficult for some people to take for granted anything about life between the sexes. At the heart of the dissension, I believe, is a failure of dialogue between man and woman—a failure that to some degree, with notable exceptions, has always existed, and now, with our present self-consciousness, is being experienced with greater anguish. I shall not use the term "dialogue" again—for the reason that the word has become so debased in the last few years that it is used to identify almost any public or private babble. Instead I shall talk about talk—real talk—between a particular man and a particular woman. Be it contentious or amicable, playful or serious, such man/woman talk requires a forthrightness on each side that represents the experience of each, and at the same time is addressed to the experience of the other without duplicity or evasion. Its medium is language, a problematical medium that may obscure as much as it may reveal; yet no other medium will serve.

Man/woman talk has been neglected, even disparaged, in philosophy and psychology, largely because it was deemed inferior to the friendly talk between two people of the same sex—usually male, in the writings of the past, more recently female in the urgings of the new feminism. Because of the commonality of their past experience and the relative absence of erotic strivings, two friends, it was held, could achieve a purer, more honest, more illuminating back and forth. The implication of such notions was that friendship was impossible between men and women, or, if this seemed too bleak, it could be said that men and women had *something* together, by no means inferior to friendship, but still something different—a something which replaced the necessity of talk with a shared domestic and sexual world. The logic of this replacement stemmed from the premise that all real talk between a man and a woman, no matter how carefully disguised, was sexually flirtatious, and if an ongoing sexual life together were agreed upon, talk was no longer necessary except for the exchange of factual information about their shared world. Should the hunger for man/woman talk now arise, men and women both must seek their flirtatious satisfactions outside their life together, and for talk turn to friends of the same sex.

What is flirtatious talk? According to the Oxford English Dictionary definition, and according to our modern understanding, flirtatious talk is a contradiction in terms, if by *talk* we mean something forthright between equals. The OED speaks of "playing at courtship," still a relatively bland description compared to our modern pejorative view, wherein flirtation is a form of double-talk, all seeming subject matter being bent to the possibility or actuality of sexual union through seduction, real or imagined. "Courtship" is by now an old-fashioned, if not obsolete, form of life between a man and a woman; at best it represented a rather stylized manner in which two people could come to know each other before sex and/or marriage. A young man and a young woman today are more apt to begin with sex, and for the kind of knowing which follows between them we have no ready word. Clearly, "courtship" is not it.

The problem with the term "flirtation," as I see it, is that either it must be restricted to describe seductive double-talk, in which sex itself is the overriding object, or else it must be enlarged to include talk where sexuality is present in the sense of acknowledged attraction between a man and a woman, without the intervention of actual sex as motive or compulsion. Unfortunately, even "sexuality" is apt to be reductive in the latter description, in that it suggests merely an instinctual magnetism. Certainly it would be foolish to disown this portion of the attraction,

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yet equally important, perhaps more important, in real man/woman talk, is the exciting possibility of receiving and offering a range of perception and sensibility whose otherness can be uniquely and surprisingly illuminating. Because playfulness and frivolity are thought to belong to flirtation in the reductive sense, I want to stress that man/woman talk of the order I am attempting to describe, and regardless of how seldom it may be achieved in these times, is not necessarily a somber, soul-searching affair. So long as equality and honesty prevail, and so long as each person tries to imagine the other's reality without dishonoring his own, the manner or mood of such talk can be various: humorous, serious, philosophical, concrete, abstract, gossipy, and so on. Employing Martin Buber's terminology, and at the same time shifting its focus from friendship between people of the same sex, I would maintain that such talk contains the supreme potentiality of confirming the other, not only as a particular human being, but as a particular man or woman, and, of course, of being confirmed in the same way.

There are basically three different male-female contexts or modes within which this real talk may take place. In each one the experience of sexual attraction, the quality of it, the acknowledgment of it, will be different. In the first mode, the man and woman talking have a current, on-going sexual commitment to each other. A common or traditional shorthand term for this arrangement is "marriage," although needless to say it does exist without marriage, and, conversely, there is nothing about the marriage ceremony itself which automatically confers these verbal pleasures on its celebrants. In these committed relationships, the issue of sex having already been settled, as it were, the specter of sex will, ironically, be normally less present than in other categories of encounter, since the couple know that, convenience apart, the conversation can at any point be interrupted—or climaxed or celebrated—in bed, and then, or later, resumed.

In the second mode, the man and woman talking are both sexually committed, but not to each other. (I am aware that the whole idea of sexual commitment—always a fragile reality, often an embattled principle—has undergone some strenuous challenges lately; but neither these challenges nor any defensive responses I might offer are to the point in my effort here. I am speaking about a way of life in which commitment, fidelity, temptation, and betrayal are all real possibilities.) In this second mode, then, both conversationalists have sexual loyalties elsewhere, and do not wish or intend to betray them. Still, a lively ingredient of the talk between them will be an awareness of—and appreciation of—the "otherness" of the other: each will respond to, and take pleasure in, the "otherly" attractiveness of the other, which may in fairness be called sexual attraction, so long as it is understood that it does not focus on—or aim at—an explicit sexual conclusion.

In the third mode, the talkers are not—quite yet, or, only just—involved in a sexual relation; their talk, in addition to its subject matter, has another—usually quite pleasant if not intoxicating—burden to bear, namely that of exploring the sexual possibilities that may lie before them. Should these two not be committed to others, this adventure may most delightfully combine the pleasures of real talk with the pleasures of real flirtation, without disservice to either. When the outcome of these explorations would result in the betrayal of a third or fourth person, however, I think that the issue of bad faith constitutes a threat to the honor and forthrightness demanded by real talk.

One of the risks I run in choosing to talk about talk between men and women is that I may be thought to be describing conversation between beings with vocal cords and ears but without bodies, just as someone talking about sex may seem to be describing beings with sexual organs but without voice and hearing. Let me say as quickly as possible there is no sex without talk, although pornography is a male venture one of whose purposes would seem to be to render the woman speechless, except for certain obligatory cries of gratitude and admiration. And, on the other side, my talkers are blessed with bodies, clothed and unclothed, assisting, questioning, or contradicting what is said. Most of us, I imagine, can recall the times when we talked rather than had the sex we wanted, such talk concealing our true desires, and, in the same spirit, the times when the poverty of real talk provoked us into sexual consolation—or, to put the matter simply, when the lust for talk was obligingly transformed into sexual lust. Even the most unregenerate seducer cherishes the secret hope of real talk with his conquest, although that is precisely what he cannot abide, what he knows would most compromise his entire career as seducer.

MY EARLY discussion, which must have seemed utopian, of the privileges of real man/woman talk must now give way to a consideration of the failure—the reasons for the failure.

Allowing for all exceptions to the contrary, I nevertheless have the impression that women generally are more disposed to talk than men, that men for the most part are more guarded and secretive in their talk with women. This disparity is epitomized by a scene enacted daily in all areas and at all levels of our society. It comes in several versions. Two will give the idea. Version A: He comes home. She is making dinner, diapering the baby, and so on. He greets her affectionately, asks

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her casually, How's it going?, or Well, what's new?—and she tells him. She talks about the children, appreciating, deploring, concern about Bobby's this, delight at Billy's that, she recounts her entertaining—or boring or outrageous—experiences at the supermarket, she does not omit mention of the malfunctioning vacuum cleaner, and, stirring away at the soup, wiping children's faces and spilled desserts, she discusses her response to an item of general public interest she saw on TV. She also recalls the few free moments in which she read an article called "Radical New Approaches to Being a Woman," and more speculation, philosophy, and self-scrutiny flow freely until, the children more or less bedded down, or banished to homework and/or TV, dinner cleared away, and a quiet moment descending over the last cup of coffee, she turns to him, flushed, expectant, as one who has unstintingly contributed her full share of the sharing, and says, Well? How was your day? Does he start off with who called him first thing at the office that morning, and how that call caused him to doubt a decision he'd made the day before, and does he pursue momentarily the problematic nature of the kind of decision-making he's required to do and his capacity or incapacity for it, does he respond to her notions about the TV event or engage her reactions to the article she read, being reminded of something *he* read on that most recently well-publicized of subjects and his response to it, does he. . . . But why pursue this? Once in a while he does. More often he does not. Perhaps he says, Oh, nothing much happened, just the usual rat-race. Perhaps he recites some dry, factual resumé of his activities. Perhaps he grasps at some domestic thread she dangled and addresses himself to an issue concerning her or the children, or even the vacuum cleaner. Perhaps he shrugs and is silent. In any case, more often than she cares to think about, she asks with some bitterness why there must be this inequality, why she is open about her life, her thoughts, and he remains closed.

Version B. He comes home. Pretty soon she comes home. The housekeeper is seeing to the children and making dinner. He (or possibly she) fixes a couple of cocktails and they share a quiet interlude before a family (or possibly a solitary adult) dinner. Well, he says, how did it go today? —and she tells him. She talks about her secretary, or co-editor, or senior research assistant, or cameraman, she appreciates, deplores, analyzes, questions, wonders about the nature of her work, of her place and performance in it, tells of other, more private thoughts and concerns that popped in and out of her day. Eventually she pauses . . . and asks . . . and does he. . . .? Well, once in a while he does. More often he does not. He does something else. And more often than she cares to think about, she asks with some bitterness why there must be this inequality, why she is open about her life, her thoughts, and he remains closed.

In whatever setting this scene occurs, his reply to her complaint may be that there isn't much to be said, that nothing interesting happened, that she is more articulate and more observant than he, but beyond or beneath his talk about not talking there has to be some uneasy recognition of his inclination toward reticence. There may be no deliberate concealment: all he may experience may be a familiar blankness following her invitation or demand that he talk. He can stand on his right to have nothing to say, or he can willfully invent a facsimile of talk, but in either case he is left with the aftertaste of an old inferiority in the realm of real talk with a woman.

IN ORDER to pursue the nature of this reticence, I shall turn to an old memory of my own. During the Depression, when I was in my late teens, my college roommate and I spent a Saturday evening prowling around the Tenderloin district of San Francisco, searching for sexual distraction of some sort. An actual sexual adventure was what we most wished for, but for reasons of timidity and poverty such a culmination seemed most unlikely. As physical fatigue began to set in, my friend mentioned, no doubt in desperation, that he had heard of a display of rubber goods at a drugstore in the heart of the district, where, on the pretense of being potential customers, we would be allowed to examine a rare and extensive collection of erotic and/or contraceptive rubber devices. Very shortly we were standing in a back room of the drugstore, staring into a large glass case, containing each specimen with name and price beneath. My recollection is that we both tried to assume the demeanor of the casual museumgoer as we inspected the display, while hoping the clerk would not badger us into making a purchase. In fact, I remember our attempt at sophisticated detachment more than I remember what was contained in the case. Except for one item called a French Tickler. This was a rubber condom to which was attached a filigree of thin rubber strands that stood out from the surface of the condom like the bristles of a hairbrush.

From my present perspective I wish to make two different, though related, points about that occasion. First, about our plight. There are a number of common expressions that could identify our condition that evening, but all I know of, though splendidly concrete, lack generalizing power. I shall therefore characterize our state by a term I first found in an article by Midge Decter, namely *undifferentiated lust*. By undifferentiated lust I mean the surgings of sexual excitement—usually chronic, often acute—that first begin to possess the young man in his adolescence. In terms of the world about him, this excitement seems to come from everywhere and

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nowhere, and to be directed at everyone and no one, as it presses for bodily release. Obviously there is pleasure, or at least the possibility of pleasure, in this lust, but just as often it is experienced as an affliction in its obsessive claims on both the body and the imagination. In time the nonspecific, unfocused nature of this lust may give way to differentiation, as actual relations with actual women develop, the attendant discriminations depending critically on real talk in these relations. But such a passage is a shaky one, for undifferentiated lust can never be wholly banished; it may be transcended, or, more often, deliberately withstood. Every man knows he can be subject, if he so chooses, to undifferentiated sexual arousal, and it should be noted that there is a pornography industry dedicated to the arousal of this undifferentiated impulse.

To return to the subject of man's inclination toward reticence. It is when undifferentiated lust begins to capture the adolescent young man that he perceives a radical difference in terms of sexual urgings between himself and a young woman. He comes to know in his own heart that this form of lust is his, not hers. And how can there be frank talk, given this difference? To admit simply that he is driven by a sexual hunger for anyone or everyone would, he believes, deprive him of release with a woman who does not share this extreme hunger. Of course, with the help of the equalitarian fiats bestowed by the sexual revolution, he may convince her or she may convince herself there is no difference: undifferentiated lust is not only the lot, but the right, of both of them. But more often, he will develop the *habit of disavowal*, pretending differentiation when there is none. Needless to say, in this simulation of real talk, he may be as deceived as she about the nature of their tie together. At first, before there can be said to be a habit, the disavowal is relatively uncomplicated. The lust that constitutes an overwhelmingly important portion of the young man's experience must, so he believes, be concealed or dissembled in his dealings with women. But if disavowal persists and remains uncorrected it soon spreads, almost by contagion, to include all manner of experience, both pleasurable and painful, that has little to do with undifferentiated lust. At this point there may be said to be a *habit of disavowal*. It is frequently misconstrued by both man and woman as his special need for privacy, his need to handle whatever is important in his life by himself. If he asserts that talk will only interfere with his concentration on what is pressing, he in effect resorts to his earlier conviction that talk about his lust would deprive him of the satisfaction he desires. Lest I be misunderstood, I am not questioning the legitimate need for privacy that both men and women have, but rather the illegitimate claim to privacy which is not privacy but rather disavowal, and which stands as enemy to real talk.

THE second point I want to consider in relation to the episode in the San Francisco drugstore concerns the rubber object in the glass case, the French Tickler. My response to this object at the time was no doubt a mixture of embarrassment and fascination, but this hardly explains why it remains in my memory. It remains, I think, because it was and is constitutive of an inferiority that man feels before woman. What I am saying is that there was something in me that found this object not remarkable but *un*remarkable. I seemed to accept without question its assertion that man in his nakedness is simply not enough to contend with a woman. And the French Tickler in its complicated manufacture metaphorically represented the proliferating web of measures he would adopt to redress his insufficiency and prove he was enough. With this image we are brought to that aspect of the man/woman problem that has received the bulk of attention in the press. Which words are used to designate the issue will depend on the sympathy or outrage of the individual writer. Without exhausting the list, I might mention the male ego (intransigent or wobbly), male chauvinism, machismo, male fragility or vulnerability. But let me return at this point to the seeming inferiority represented by the French Tickler. However much my democratic prejudices may be offended by this sensation of inequality, I still believe it to be a fact in every man's experience of himself. So I must ask the question, How did it come about? I ask the question, knowing it is baffling and knowing there are many theories, cultural and psychological, that address themselves to it. With what is to follow, I do no more than add my own theory to the lot of explanations, without, however, dissipating my own bafflement. Though the French Tickler seems literally to refer to that later period in man's life when he is sexually active, I prefer to see the object as a constitutive symbol. This is to say that I believe the feeling of inferiority much precedes puberty, going back to a time when the male child first perceives his mother to be a different order of sexual being from himself. Were I to be more literal here I would refer to incestuous strivings and their attendant castration anxieties as my causative theory. Such strivings may or may not occur, but I do not believe them crucial so far as the issue of inferiority is concerned. I am more inclined to think of them as early attempts to alleviate the experience of inequality through some sort of vain and crude wish for sexual or bodily fusion. With his early apprehension of the difference between himself and his mother, the little boy tries to comprehend a mysterious and awesome complexity having to do with both sexuality and child-bearing that is, by its very nature, hidden from him. Since his own sexuality (and that of all males, including his father) is external, vis-

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ible, objective, circumscribed, he cannot comprehend a sexuality whose most formidable powers are concealed. What he cannot know, in his way of knowing, impresses and attracts him—and at the same time frightens him. Comparing his explicit sexuality with his mother's, he finds his own body wanting. Envy and fear conspire to tempt him to exalt the female body and devalue his own, although it will not be long before the same conspiracy will tempt him to exalt his own sexuality at the expense of the female body. Yet even if he tries to settle for the latter, he will never wholly obliterate his feeling of inferiority. Actually, over the course of his life, both temptations will nag him, each suggesting an inequality he fears and yet believes he does not deserve. Envy is no stranger to the human condition, be it male or female. But Freud, because of a misunderstanding of the nature of envy, was wrong, I believe, in his famous formulation of envy between the sexes. It is not literally the body or any specific part of the body that either man or woman envies in the other, in the sense of wishing to possess it as part of his or her physical nature. The primary experience of man before woman is awe, which in turn leads him to envy her mysterious inner complexity. And insofar as women envy men, and I think they do, they do not envy man his penis. Barring the occasional morbidly literal-minded exception, what women envy are the prerogatives and privileges of manhood that they believe or suspect are superior to those of womanhood.

Out of the background I have described, man comes to dread that in his life with women he will be found wanting. The irony is that whatever devices his will or history's will may contrive to protect him from exposure, these devices paradoxically serve to enforce his apprehension. In the light of this predicament it is understandable why the male ego remains vulnerable to all manner of womanly challenge. To the degree that a man regards his inferiority as a constitutional or physical fact, rather than a feeling or apprehension, real talk will elude him, for real talk can exist only between equals. Without it he will fall subject to those domineering and apologetic maneuverings, both institutionalized and personal, with which we are so familiar.

To recapitulate, I have stressed two aspects of man's experience that are obstacles to talk with women. When the habit of disavowal associated with undifferentiated lust is joined to the apprehension of inferiority, forthright talk with a woman can be seen as perhaps the most perilous venture known to man. Still, like other ontological necessities, this venture would be refused only by a fool or madman on the ground that it is not his birthright or will not yield to easy prescription.

Though I suggested earlier that women generally are more disposed to talk than men, this disposition is more questionable and more double-edged than is immediately apparent from the example of the man who cannot respond in kind to the woman's talk about her day. To begin to describe woman's disabilities in the realm of talk, let me return to the matter of man's vulnerability stemming from his habit of disavowal and his feeling of inferiority. While it is true that his vulnerability is, so to speak, of his own making, it nevertheless finds its fruition in his life with women who, in a sense I shall presently describe, choose to exploit this condition rather than engage it honestly and imaginatively. To judge from the current indignation over the male ego, with its weaknesses and excesses, we might be inclined to think we were witnessing a revolutionary new discovery about the nature of man. Not so. Consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly, women have always known in their bones about male vulnerability. In the failure of real talk between man and woman, she is guilty, too, although her complicity is of a different kind. When real talk is failed, guilt is incurred, in that there is an injury to the human order. When guilt is not acknowledged—and such acknowledgment being indeed painful, it often is not—the guilty one is tempted to seek refuge in contempt for the other. Since both parties can be guilty for the failure of talk, it is easy to see how men and women come to have contempt for each other that is otherwise undeserved.

To return to the nature of woman's complicity, take the issue of man's undifferentiated lust. Are his attentions, in their mixture of blandishment and obfuscation, so convincing that she is blind to the particular demon driving him? Hardly. She is, I believe, as aware of her difference in this regard as he is of his. What she experiences that corresponds to some degree to his undifferentiated lust is an undifferentiated desire to be desired by anyone and everyone. Although lust may be one of its consequences, this desire of hers is not to be confused with his undifferentiated lust, nor does she make this confusion. She knows that he is driven in a way she is not, and it is this perception that gives her an edge in the negotiation that may, she hopes, support the achievement of her own aims, whatever they may be. Gradually, or even suddenly, in a manner that has little to do with who she thinks she is or what she thinks she is entitled to, she realizes she is the object of a consuming hunger that may be complied with, opposed, or manipulated, depending upon her own needs and wishes. In other words, she senses, dimly or not, that her sexuality is not only a source of pleasure for herself as well as procreation, but also a negotiable item in her own endeavors in this world—with the provision that its negotiability

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will depend on the deceit of non-negotiability. Compared to the deviousness necessary to this enterprise, prostitution is a fairly simpleminded, frank business arrangement in which payment is made for services rendered. At any rate, to the extent this power of negotiation predominates in a woman's dealings, she assists in the sexual objectification of herself that is already the perceptual form of his undifferentiated lust.

Despite her recognition that his physical and verbal overtures are at the mercy of his undifferentiated lust, she may, because she is flattered or excited or encouraged in her own designs, pretend there is a differentiation to his lust that there simply is not. When rather than terminate the negotiation she instead protests, "All you want is my body!" she is being disingenuous, for she knows how eagerly he will, with his capacity for disavowal, lend elaborate support to her pretending. On the other hand, if her response is seemingly more emancipated, such as "Well, why not?," she still dissembles her own experience with its difference from the man's in favor of easy agreement. All this negotiating and dissembling on both parts is ruinous to real talk, since, romantic prejudices notwithstanding, sex, like housework, is to some degree subject to negotiation. Talk is not.

As I have already mentioned, man's recurrent fear that he will be found wanting makes him peculiarly vulnerable to challenge. And that fear, as life proceeds, becomes vague and amorphous in his experience, imposing its painful claim not only on sexual performance itself but also on intellectual, emotional, and even spiritual realms. In his compulsion to allay, rather than contend with, this fear, his gestures will be, in a general way, either self-assertive or self-negating or both. The woman who heeds her imaginative sense of the origin of these gestures will be less inclined to take them literally. But should she fail that heeding, should she see no more than the gestures themselves, she thereby grants herself her own license for self-assertion or self-expression—a license extending to all seasons. If she need fear no real talk from the man that might limit her license, her self-confidence can reach such outrageous proportions that she need no longer attend to any response.

There is a potential background for such an unhappy turn of confidence, having to do with her own relation to her inner mystery that eludes man's objective searchings. Her recognition of essential difference, like the man's, begins in childhood, and with puberty she has intimations of how vast that difference is. For her there is a rush of a hugely complicated intermingling of sexual and procreative possibility, of which she will be periodically reminded for most of her adult life. Though her experience of this possibility will widen and deepen with time, as will her discriminations about her experience, still she will not be a knowledgeable master of her own mystery, in that it will persist as an enigma to her, and, needless to say, to man too. Nevertheless, she will come to appreciate the scope of this enigma. And in this light, man's nature may seem simplicity itself when compared to the unfathomable variety of her own nature. Besides its appearance of simplicity, man's nature can seem almost peripheral to her fulfillment. The danger for her lies in the manner in which she deals with her own enigma: unless she respects what must remain enigmatic she will be tempted to assume more than she knows. This is not to say that she will merely give in to the arrogant assumption of superiority, for that conceit spares no one. Her hazard is worse than that—namely, that she will mistakenly assume for herself a completeness, sufficient unto itself. As I have said, man's vulnerability stems from his fear of being found wanting. Woman may fear she will be unwanted, but not that her inner parts will be wanting. Her parts, indeed, are Nature's marvel. She is, literally, the embodiment of the miracle of life. What is conferred on her is no less than—and also no more than—the distinction of being Nature's vehicle for the eternal renewal of life. That this distinction is also a privilege, and also a burden, and also a mystery—that she is the vehicle of creation, not the Creator—these realities may blur as she yields to her besetting, in some ways overweening, temptation to experience her own physical nature as somehow primary, inviolable, complete. She is of course vulnerable in many ways, but not in the particular ways I have indicated for man. Her prideful temptation is toward a belief in her completeness—a completeness to which man can make no more than an incidental contribution, reduced to a mere footnote to her existence. Her sense of completeness begins with a misreading of the enigma of her physical possibility, but if she indulges—and is indulged in—this delusion, completeness will soon include far more than physical possibility.

Let me be childishly explicit about this extreme situation: completeness is complete, meaning that intervention is not only not needed but will no longer be tolerated. At this stage, man's failure to speak his mind, which has already collaborated in her sense of completeness, is now met by her repudiation of the need for further talk.

Man's sense of inferiority and woman's sense of completeness—both may be regarded as the particular vulnerabilities each brings to the occasion of the possibility of real talk between them, each vulnerability implying in its nature the different ways the two people may betray the occasion. For, in truth, man is not inferior to woman, and woman is not complete.

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My concentration on the difficulties of man/woman talk should not be interpreted to mean that man/man and woman/woman talk are not without their own dangers. Although the latter form of talk has not been my subject in this essay, let me say briefly that the commonality of experience between man and man and between woman and woman yields, in the realm of talk, both advantages and disadvantages. Because the talkers have their gender in common, and therefore much of the nature of their experience, they begin with a kind of agreement that facilitates a probing of this shared experience, so that there seems to be almost a shorthand for covering issues quickly and yet incisively. On the other hand, such commonality entails the risk, simply because it is never confronted by a wholly other response, that insofar as the speakers confirm one another, what they confirm are simply previously held presumptions and prejudices.

For man and woman there is no such shorthand, nor should there be. Moreover, where there seems to be a previously agreed-upon shorthand, I would suspect it serves evasion more than convenience. Real talk between a man and a woman has a hard-won, even laborious quality when compared to the easy intimacies between friends of the same sex. If I designate the tempo of man/woman talk as adagio, I certainly do not mean that less is said, for an adagio tempo, though its beat is slow, allows for rapidity and subtlety and a varied texture of expression. The reason for this tempo lies in the fact that for man and woman each is other to the other, no matter how much knowledge they may gain about each other over the course of their relation. And being other to the other, there is an element of startle to the back and forth, of being continually and surprisingly caught off balance. I am of course now talking about talk at its best, in which honesty, equality, and imagination of one's own and the other's reality prevail. Real talk of this order, I must insist, is no permanent state of bliss: rather does it come and go, scrutiny of its wonders being the surest way to dispel it. But even without such scrutiny it falls back or withers into meaninglessness, so that the ground must be won and rewon. Early in a relation both sex and talk give powerful help to the restoration of meaning when it has been lost. But as the relation endures and the years pass, the balance between sex and talk shifts. Sex may still offer brief reconciliation, but unless meaning is restored through talk as well, the sexual consolation will become increasingly barren, even yielding to bitterness and despair. Language is now of the essence, and real talk assumes a heavier obligation. The words that broke through the last impasse and the impasse before that linger in memory and will no longer serve. Verbal habits have become familiar, and expressions that once carried deep personal meaning repeated use has rendered empty. What is needed now is not mere variety or novelty, but a precision of speech that can be inspired only by a more vigorous, more courageous imagination.

Toward the beginning of this essay I suggested that in real talk men and women could confirm and be confirmed not only as particular human beings, but as the particular man or woman each was meant to be. But this is a rather highflown way of putting the matter, so let me conclude in a more modest fashion that is at the same time more appropriate to my calling. Real talk between a man and a woman offers the supreme privilege of keeping the other sane and being kept sane by the other. As we look about us, it is obvious this privilege is not often fulfilled, and I suspect this has always been true. Nor is it the only way of staying sane. But it will remain, I believe, one of our best hopes.

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On Becoming a Jew

Herbert Gold

IN THE cathedral at Palma, on the island of Mallorca to which many Marranos fled from mainland Spain, I found Menorahs wrought in gold. Stars of David, Hebrew imagery in stained mosaics which had been taken as booty into the church as the captured relics of Christianity were taken into the vodoun temples of Haiti. Of course, there was no Jewish community in Palma. But there were Jewish traditions. And when a prominent bullfight judge and architect discovered that his family was descended from Marranos, he was so filled with shock and pride that he could not keep silent; he had to speak and he had to act; honoring his past, he and his entire family left the Church to become Protestant.

Why Protestant? That was the furthest distance he could imagine. Since he was a Jew, he could not be a Catholic; but since he was a Catholic, he could not be a Jew. Therefore he was a Protestant. The confusion continues, even hundreds of years after the deaths of Ferdinand and Isabella, who ordered the expulsion of the Hebrews and sped Columbus on his voyage—it is argued by some—because he really wanted to leave fast.

The bullfight judge continued his practice of architecture, but gave up bullfight-judging. "It's not in our tradition," he said haughtily.

This Jewish Protestant Catholic was in shy contact with the peculiar treasure. The history of the Jews is a history of an organism, not an abstract idea or artifact. There are ideas and a construction—God, Israel, and Torah—but the past and future of Judaism also mean tradition, legend, dissension, heresy, apostasy, and stubborn self-recognition of persistence in history. All Jews take part in the Jewish past and future, even in denial, even the Maoist Fatah hippie drop-out anti-Zionists of Berkeley and San Francisco, even myself at times in my span, just as the Marranos and *conversos,* taking other habits under the persuasion of the Inquisitors' wheels and fires, have remained obstinately within the tradition.

In San Francisco, Cambridge, and New York one can find examples of the Jewish Fatah, who try to look like Arabs and succeed rather easily. With silky beards and glowing eyes, slouching bodies and stubborn mouths, they also look like young Polish rabbis to their puzzled parents in Miami Beach or Chicago. I have met Jewish students in Berkeley who collect money for the cause of the Liberation of Palestine from the Zionists. One trendy Maoist offers the camps in Gaza as an example of communal living; the fratricidal murders of Bedouin and *fedayeen* in Jordan provide an opportunity to develop Women's Liberation among the struggling Arab masses (fatherless families give mothers a chance). I went to a meeting of pro-Fatah students at which Arabs and Jews alike preached the radical solution to the miseries of the Middle East: uprooting of a nation, destruction of a way of life, annihilation of an ideal and a few million idealists, followed by inevitable world brotherhood. That's the omelet for which Soviet weapons might need to break a few eggs. The Jewish socialist who served as chairman of the meeting swayed and prayed and shut his eyes as he sought to recall the language of the Little Red Book and Yasir Arafat.

And then there are the summer pilgrimages of the pretty little suburban Sharons and Debbies to pick pears on the kibbutz. They too are in search of a better future—also a present, also a past—though the Jewish Fatah groan about Uncle Jakes, the Hadassah and Hillel, bourgeois conformity. But the Sharons and Debbies also explore a discontent with the way things are in the kindly Canaan into which their parents have led them.

One of the oddest obituaries in America is the death of the melting-pot ideal. Through several centuries, the plan told of the stranger welcoming a brother in the comfortable home-cooking of American optimism. Now the serial dream of one big happy family is suspended. Blandness and American acquiescence in injustice have finally pushed the most excluded groups, black and Indian, to bitter chagrin and sporadic urban warfare. Even the tenderly, somewhat gingerly accepted, such as the Jews, begin to have doubts that everything ends with America. The stopping of history was also the dream of the Soviet state; all will live together, thinking the same stately thoughts. In the USSR, it ended with brutal

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suppression and camps; in the U.S., with stubborn griefs.

The merchandise we are all buying in our exclusive empire is death. It's the ultimate product for which we save up, and the more we seem to cheat it by our time-defying acquisitions, comfort, power, and distraction, the more elaborate and formal, like a Pharaoh's, does our death become. The product is noted with ritual tributes, but it's the same product that others meet silently in ditches and dirt houses. We have gotten, by a circuitous route, exactly where everyone else gets, only we have rolled with more pomp and on softer wheels. Nations are like men in this. Only some sense of continuity in love, suffering, and community can give an answer to the clockwork summons of mortality.

Americans don't give up easily. Blacks, Indians, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, many who have a sense of their past are in search of meanings which the American melting-pot dream didn't provide. Even the young wander about in their desultory, athletically haggard fashion, looking for values they never had; to be Indian and weird, if necessary; surfing with feathers in their hair, and Acapulco Gold and a rock mass on the portable stereo, inventing a history and piety of the community of youth, dope, and rock. Macrobiotic purity is succeeded by biodegradable ecology in the search for a cause. The impulse to sacrifice is not dead.

IN SUBURBAN America, in striving urban America, the tradition of belief has dwindled under the stridency of entertainment, passivity, distraction. My own isolation as a Jew was a kind of starvation; so was the timeless jockeying of everyone else I knew, planted in Cleveland or New York, doing the things laid out for them, practical and skeptical and hopeful, as Americans are supposed to be, and not caring of the future or the past. In the past, men sought an electric union with God. In the present, adequate power plants would be enough. And as to the future, it's a mere continuation of the present, but with more.

But the more is not enough. In the very hour before comfortable assimilation, many Jews have paused to take stock—just as many Marranos stubbornly repeated their ancient prayers. Spain and an all-absorbing Christianity were not enough. America and an all-absorbing technology are not enough. The intentions of men require vessels more complicated than powers, creeds, and satisfactions. My own malaise in the present is not different from everyone else's, for whom the goods and goodies do not suffice—money, family, house, even the respect of the respectable and the envy of the envious. Even comfort, health, pride. What I found myself doing was to ransack the past for any help I could gather. I began with the simplest and most atavistic of resources, loyalty to my own body and its dim burden of memory, to the habits and energies of my family, to the distinctions of uncalled-for sentiment. Even, I suppose, to the moderately comic and inconclusive fact that I have a bony nose, like Moses, like the Jewish Fatah leader, and like Armenians who wear moustaches. I had very little evidence for my place in the chain.

Through history, the daily fate of Jews was drenched and driven through their God-soaked—also sun-soaked, rain-soaked—souls. The strictness of piety combined with the needs of survival amid strangers to create the haunted energies which awed and threatened the powers around them. And yet they were a mere remnant, wandering over Europe, Africa, and the Orient. They acquired the languages, skin tints, and postures of their hosts. Why did they survive? What curse or blessing, or both together, made it possible? Both Jew and stranger knew there must be magic in the Covenant.

Modern times ended the obsession with God, though the need for intensity remained as Jews roamed other, secular domains. Magic did not disappear, though the conditions of magic were altered. It was now science, art, and the hope of changing society which engaged the energies of the remnant. Religion was not so much made human as transformed into social and political enthusiasms; fanaticism lost its connection with eternal belief. Revolutionaries, scientists, and artists sought the power of holy thralldom; sensualists followed, and so did wastrels; the reign of restlessness was inaugurated. Whatever the times drew from the French Revolution, it soaked the souls of Jews, too. And yet, to the surprise of everyone—it would not have surprised the Inquisitors with their fires and rakes—most of the liberated Jews remained Jews. Exile nourished powerful nostalgias for Jerusalem; so did the end of exile. Exclusion fortified a link between lonely men and a principle of unity; so did the end of exclusion. Jews remained Jews.

The search for a principle of unity meant, for some, finding their way to the homeland once again—yet for the first time!—in Israel. For others, it meant the strict building of a dwelling place in the form of power in the world, achievement, friendship, love, awareness of separateness, these things secreted like a carapace out of our own bodies, wherever we went. The doom of such willfulness, given the frailty of bodies and the fading in time of all desire and accomplishment, never seems to discourage those who build the pretty shells which they think are armor. Sometimes it's money and power, sometimes ideal and sacrifice, love or family, sometimes art and discovery.

The condominium-builder in Miami Beach has this desire for carapace in common with the fanatic campus protester and the heart researcher in a medical school laboratory. They are all defining their ground in a way which they hope to make

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permanent and safe amid the disasters and isolations of morality. No, not safe; they know it isn't safe. But they know nothing truer than their own effort, whether it is that of prayer, incitement, or wit.

The name "Hebrew" seems to mean wanderer or men from yonder. In our time the Jews remain yondermen, striving to come home through the dream which they have carried intact so many thousands of years. Through all the horrors, they still survive. It must mean something, they say, and it does. They do not win, but they are not beaten, either. They are willing to define the fact of survival as a victory. Perhaps it is a miraculous one.

Who chose the Jews, why, and to what end? No joke, rhyme, or incantation really answers a peculiarity which somehow happened in history and seems likely to go on happening in the future. "Behold a people that dwells alone, but among the nations." In the past they were chosen to be alone, driven out into isolation, and in searching for answers to loneliness, they also found some answers for others and in others. The Messiah isn't here yet? they asked. Let us go back to Jerusalem anyway.

Because Jerusalem was not easy for me to find, I became more stubborn and, indeed, preoccupied. Obsession—well, not yet. But I was busy inventing a Judaism in which I did not dwell. What did the Jew from Lakewood, who knew only anti-Semitism, not even bar mitzvah'd, know about Judaism? It was a heritage I had not touched. I returned to the belief in which I never believed and therefore could never abandon. Through history and the tradition of Israel I found my own obscured allegiances. Since I could not deny the suffering of my people, but also could not share it—what right had I to say I suffered?—I might at least join in its celebration and pride. I had earned little. I merely drifted through the first half of my years with the restless half-memory that I had lived other lives, other lives lived in me. I made a clamor and there was a clamor within. I merited no revelations. There is no justice in nature or history, but for the creatures of time there is a saving, undeserved blessing, just as if a God and justice exist. Besides the remainder of what was, visions of what might be are soaked into even the most strayed soul.

The young are said to be given to idealism. Sometimes time makes clear the connections between the ideal and the restless self.

I HAVE been caught like the Mallorcan bullfight judge, like Columbus sailing to Santo Domingo. It was not a direction I understood, but the place to which currents and anxieties led me. I thought I was going elsewhere. But now that I have landed, I must explore the riches which surround me along with the risks.

The old Jew in the synagogue in Moscow struggled to say something I could understand, and finally found his only English phrase: "Come out fightin'." Judaism is not in practice "a way to make a decent exit from the world," as some rabbis have said, though it is true that any way of living is also a way to die. Despite times of acceptance of disaster, the Jewish tradition has most of all been a way to keep a presence in the world. Contradiction is contained by history. The lost Jew is still a Jew, and so is the Jew converted away, and so are the men and women caused by their hearts, by love, or by eccentricity to be inducted into the tribe of Israel. Death is much on the Jew's mind, as it must be, since he dines on history, but life on earth is his business and occupation. There is no other life. All the hints and promises of another world come to very little which is convincing in Judaism. No other life, no other world. There can be a better life, but it will be here, on this earth. This is where the work is to be done. The scientist, philosopher, poet, and real-estate promoter all share in this disposition. The secrets of physics, the perfections of melody, the summation of hope and desire all come out of the soul's striving on earth within a body condemned to mortality. The housing subdivider also says: It's to show I can do it. It's for my children. It's to make a mark.

Therefore the Jew partakes of any mystic's basic character. He *is* and *knows* just because he finds himself there, in direct and unmediated connection with God—his life is his proof. "Oh taste and see," the psalm says, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good."

Oh taste and see is the most important and operative part of the command. Is the Lord good? Does He even exist? Oh taste and see *something.*

If we lived truly intimate lives, intimate with our brothers or with God, intimate even with ourselves, this passionate appetite might diminish. But we need the leap of desire, of mystery, of ceremony and ritual, of incantation, in order to reconcile us to the brevity and isolation of our days. The abyss is essential to the potent striving of the Word. We know the abyss is there. We hear the Word in the emptiness just before dawn. Without death there is no birth, without exclusion no unity. No intimacy, no success, no riches and powers, no praise and beauty can reconcile us from the exclusion which death inexorably provides. Therefore the appetite for life can never be satisfied. Sometimes, in malignant dismay, it may turn to an appetite for death, and we see that all around us.

If I think of history with my common distractedness, I think of illustrations in a book, I think of stories I have read, I remember lyrical lines of ancient music. But other times were not lived by our ancestors as quaint etchings or marvelous anecdotes. To imagine the future, of which we know almost nothing, is paradoxically easy: we imagine a continuation of life today, with science-

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fiction gadgets attached. To imagine the past, about which we have so many clues, is immediately to fall into melodramatic or pleasant dream. Whatever fantasy or sympathy I manage to project backward, I am still here at my typewriter, hitting keys and watching the paper blur as I smear it.

In olden times, perhaps loneliness did not exist and we were all as busy as termites just surviving. That means going very far back, so far back that we were not yet what we consider a human being to be. At those beginnings of men in society we didn't need art or religion because we lived our myth in timeless cycles, dying at the will of nature, without record, emitting only the brief and unrecorded complaints of animals. Well, I can't remember such times. The stubborn organism of the beehive or the ant colony provides a model, but all I can imagine is a single cave dweller or tree dweller, scratching the bark, scratching the wall, wanting to make a record of propitiation to stand for his life on earth. When he scratched himself to get a louse, he was doing something practical. When he scratched the wall of the cave to fix a moment of his passing, he was doing something practical, too.

Later, it seems, the story of creation was sufficient to account for beginnings. Confidence in revelation and ultimate salvation accounted for endings. I don't recall these times, either.

What we have gained through the accumulations of technique cannot replace the old need for knowledge of beginnings and endings. I came to realize this in my own time, and before I was too tired to begin the search in another direction from appetite and ambition, though appetite and ambition are still welcome to me. Now I need to join history and trace the clues.

No act of will can give me patience for ritual and ceremony; I am too American and marked by America for them. I can entertain any action, only reserving the right to judge it later. The contemplation of myths makes my knees jiggle with impatience. It's the long line of melody which captures me, not the memory of song. I am skeptical of the truth of the myths, though obedient to their power, as I yield to the memory of a melody. I study the stories of my people with horror, delight, puzzlement, and an increasing hope that the clues really are there to be gathered. Out of this hope and connection, even with nightmares, even lacking the promised truth, I build an allegiance. The suffering cannot have been in vain; nor the joy, either. Perhaps I am really a Chinese Jew, worshiping ancestors; but I mustn't assail the fragile structure with such jokes.

My belief in the God of the Jews is isolated and wordless despite all these words, bound up with the nation of Jewry which has found itself elsewhere, at home, in the secular society of Israel. Raised in the goiter belt of the Great Lakes, awed by the brief flight of the Canadian soldiers which died all in a day, learning baseball and hamburgers and petting, I sought out the dizzy Kabbalists and the ecstatic Hasidim of Safed. I grieved with the twice-born steely ones of the Israeli army. Through so many travels, this has come to be what I was looking for. The pains of doubt did not end in faith. I eked my way toward allegiance first. That's what all the changes meant.

The abyss of loneliness is bridged by community; the abyss is still there, but so is the community.

A precarious and indistinct community for an American from Ohio, New York, and California, not bar mitzvah'd, not married in the faith, not even sure what that "faith" entails! But in my precarious and indistinct understanding of Judaism, I join many others, even those more devoted and learned, whose lives were fitted to precision and detail. I know nothing, but they knew nothing, too. The nothing they knew was more earned than my blotched ignorance, but we submit to each other as brothers. They were strong. I was slow. There is always a difference among brothers.

I wish my sense of participation had a more specific content to fill the spacious yearning. In the Soviet synagogue I remained a tourist. So be it. My ignorance is also my heritage. I find Jews and Judaism elsewhere. So be it. Questing is my heritage. In another time I might have been an apostate. In this time I am simply another Jew.

In my time the history of glory and suffering has at last become more important than the ancient struggle for light. Aspiration for illumination is shared with the rest of humanity. We are all ecumenical now. Everyone sees religion as a last resort—and looks elsewhere. The secrets remain locked up, and some, optimistically despairing, say the questions all men ask are merely pseudo-questions, the answers impossible, irrelevant, and trivial. Asking them nevertheless remains essential to survival. The various gods remain potent as mysteries; the mysteries remain potent as gods.

If I'm a mystic, I'm a peculiar one, a midnight impostor, a slugabed and amnesiac seer. I bear no unique revelation. I have a passion for my past without the sure immanence of it in my own life. I am an American of these times. If I'm a part of the crowd, as I am, I nevertheless have a private way to locate myself in the mass. American, Jew, writer, husband twice, father a lot, fretting about injustice, fretting about earning my keep, born in a certain time and place, dead in an uncertain time and place to come, chewing up my isolated portion of the world and its goods, here I am. What right belongs to me?

I have found a part of my way. Though the way was not mine, I found it. The words and memories belong to everyone; history belongs to

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history. A portion of it has come to me through my own miniature term on earth. The immovable moves me as it moves everyone. And yet I also know I'll never come to the end of my impulse—to union with God—why do I say *never*? It's neither in my nature nor in the possibility of the times. And yet, why do I say *never*? Has the world been with some men too long to be shucked off by mere visions of truth? Why never?

I still confuse foolishness and cruelty, and pass much time in anger, and pass much time in mere funning, and exasperate myself even more than others. My pen still twitches like a nervous straw in my fingers and my typewriter takes me on noisy trips. *Why never?*

My lack of knowledge and experience of Judaism forced me to carve out something in which I could believe. This effort must have helped to convince me; what I have, I have won, and therefore cling to. Defiance is surely a part of it. The old men in the synagogue in Moscow, rocking, chanting, and praying amid the contemptuous Soviet police, in the sight of the plaques which thank the Soviet state for all blessings, have guarded their faith in an extremity of risk. I made no such sacrifice. Soviet Jews defy destruction while American Jews merely resist a mild, moonish gravitational pull. Law and legend, those two traditional supports of Judaism—the word of God, the traditions of piety—have weakened drastically, and yet the pared body is lean and resilient.

Zionism and Israel are part of the explanation, but not all of it. The sufferings of Jewry have obliged the remnant to stand by. But that's not why the slide into silence has halted. The need to believe is essential; all peoples have discovered this. And so the riches of suffering and hope are not denied even by the comfortable, confused Jews of America. An aura of law, legend, and mystery has come to infest the miracle of survival. God Is One and We Are Here is at the center of it. Even for those like me, for whom the communication with God is scattered by other desires, the peculiarity of survival provokes a passionate wonder. History keeps the miracle alive, even in this America which has been so kind and done such violence. The long dinner tables of the burial societies, Zionist centers, the B'nai B'rith, cooperative grouplets, even the thing-crazed country clubs and the new suburban temples built in glass and California redwood as monuments to Unitarian Judaism, as celebration of the Americans of the Mosaic Persuasion, that merry phrase invented by those for whom the word "Jew" was an agony, are joined with the sparse gatherings in stuffy synagogues of the survivors from small towns of Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Rumania. The synagogue was named for the town. Those of Kamenetz are now those of Cleveland, and the sons of those of Cleveland, once of Kamenetz, are now those of Milwaukee and San Francisco, with babies for whom Kamenetz will be as foreign as Bakersfield. The rabbis and the insurance plans tend to "the needs of the congregation"—high holidays, meeting space, sick visits, congratulations on the birth of grandchildren or income property, commiseration at the marrying of *goyim* or hippies, hot meals in time of death or divorce, tears and the pressing of hands at the funerals which constantly diminish those odd little Zions. They are leveled by urban renewal. The Kamenetz congregation dies. Built of stone, an established synagogue becomes the St. Boothe Church of God, Inc., or a poverty program office. The dentist and stockbroker sons persist, against all expectations, in remembering; so do their writer sons; amazingly, so do the lawyers and engineers, even unto those who have joined the country clubs for the golf, swimming, contacts, and to provide satire for writers.

Ecstasy, feasting, the exercise of joy are less visible. The stringy and heavy old folks have drunk most of their wine. The young, for whom the word "greenhorn" is ancient history, wearing their slim jeans and driving sports cars, come to wonder what the connections really are, just as the hip young things learn to think about falling in love years after they have started on the Pill. No ghetto style is identical with Judaism, although in our time the ghetto style represents the Judaism Americans have left behind. The Lower East Side, those fathers and grandfathers whom the men of my generation turned from, was only one branch and one aspect of a history. Now there are others. The image of Man is distraught and various, and only occasionally as pure as the words which announce the Sabbath, "Come, my beloved." Then body and spirit are united, as they ought to be. In love, in deep friendship, in oneness with time and timelessness, the beloved comes.

The rest of our days, time seems more pressing than perfection. History takes precedence over the nostalgias of idea. In that insistence lies Judaism's quarrel with Platonic Christianity. Exile means that history exists, really exists, and moves from the moment of exile to some merely possible, merely imagined consummation in the future. The movement is what matters. That's what is real. Exile and dispersion are exile and dispersion from something which remains alive in the mind. Grief is a measure of what is lost. We can mourn only if we still remember. The idea of the Messiah and a revived Jerusalem means that hope propels history toward a fulfillment of desire. Distress, rage, and grief also imply history and hope. And the Messiah? Waiting becomes a habit of impatience unless it submits to dream consummations. Jews usually don't.

Nevertheless, Sabbatianism, Karaism, Frankism, Hasidism, all turned in days of heavy stress from the rigors and sobriety of formal Judaism to an ecstatic and mystic com-

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mitment in which time and history could be captured in a moment. Obscure myths and immediate needs combined to revive fertility rites, singing, dancing, and the conversations of incoherent souls, incoherently eloquent. Deep in the past, and right up to the time of the concentration camps, there were epidemics of conviction that the redeemer was imminent—and why not? He was promised, he was needed. The Kabbalah, the magic non-book of mysteries which were revelations and revelations which were mysteries, led to the Book of Foundations—but what are these foundations?—and the Zohar. Many Jews wearied of hope, despair, and waiting. For some, America, with its gold in the streets, was the Promised Land. But it didn't turn out like that. And in Europe, the exile, which after all was borne through the centuries with some patience, suddenly, by the wish of a shrill radio voice I still remember from my childhood in Cleveland, a screech rising and fading in transatlantic broadcast, changed into a horror.

Traditional Jewishness and the visions of prophets in each generation combined to imagine Israel. The archaic habit of dreaming gathered a specific shape. The magic of realization was a matter of human effort and will; the concept was fixed like a weathered knot in the Jewish mind. The mad Hasidim, exalted, dancing in Poland and Russia, brought their celebrations to rocky farms in the Judean desert. So did the anarchists, Marxists, and stubborn Talmudists of every variety. With all its stern needs and intentions, Israel is a product of ecstasy.

Haskalah—Enlightenment—is the contemporary name for what turned out to be a religious revival inspired by a combination of sense and poetry, anguish and need of focus. Martin Buber was a German, an academic philosopher, searching abstraction for meaning; he came to believe his retelling of Hasidic tales to be the most important work of his life. He died in Jerusalem, with a small group of followers who lectured Israelis thusly: Be more Jewish. Find a way with the Arabs. Keep on trying.

Even for the Jews of Israel, the promised land is still to be found. Time does not have a stop.

It's so hard to get on is what the young tell us. We'll make it easier by doing what comes easy. Maybe this is what salvation might be like, but it isn't. Within the pell-mell history of the Jews, my own growing up was one in a familiar tradition of exile, that of abstention from Jewish feeling. It suited the American Midwestern suburb in which I was born. It doesn't suit me anymore. Now the visions of my grandfathers and their fathers before them give a rudder to my whole drifting boyhood in Cleveland, my midcentury complicity in the way things are; and even in my ignorance and doubt, I am ready to ride with ecstasies which I have not earned, sacrifices I have not shared. Somehow the time which stood dimly behind me now stands with me. It judges. It promises. It does not predict the future.

Did I have a night of revelation? No, I had only a life and lives, my own and the millions. I came to use words for many reasons, but mostly because I was asked by tribal history to use many words, all the words, even poor and wasteful ones, even prideful and shameless ones, to hide and finally to reveal my portion of the Word.

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R. S. V. P.—A Story

Robert Nozick

THE project began with high hopes, excitement even. Though people later came to think it just dumb, founded on a mistake so obvious that those who started it deserved its consequences, no one raised objections until well after the project was operating. True, everyone said it would be a long venture, probably not producing results for many generations. But at the beginning the newspapers carried frequent reports on its progress ("Nothing yet"). Practical jokers would call saying, "Is this the Interstellar Communications Project? Well I'm a BEM you'd be interested in talking to," or "I have a collect call for the Interstellar Communications Projects from the constellation of Sagittarius. Will you accept the charges?" It was in the public eye, looked fondly upon.

Much thought had been given to deciding what listening devices to use and what sorts of signals to study intensively. What would be the most likely wavelengths for messages to come on? Would the messages be something like TV signals rather than consecutive prose? How would one tell that a signal was sent by intelligent beings rather than produced by some natural process? Investigating this last problem produced the Theological Project as a side-effect, for proponents of the argument from design, one traditional argument for the existence of God, had long wrestled with the same difficulties: couldn't any pattern, however intricate and wonderful, have been produced by some unknown mechanism? How could one be sure that an intelligence was behind it? Some foolproof test was needed, especially since, with a sufficiently complex manual of translation, any glop coming across could be decoded into an interesting message. Sending a return message and receiving a reply would take many years, perhaps generations, and it wouldn't do to have everyone on earth jumping for joy and holding their breath if they were just talking to the interstellar equivalent of the bedpost. The solution lay in abstract mathematical patterns, not realized (so far as anyone knew) in any actual causal mechanism and which (it was thought) couldn't be so realized. For example, there's no known causal process that generates the sequence of prime numbers in order; no process, that is, that wasn't expressly set up by an intelligent being for that purpose. There doesn't seem to be any *physical* significance to precisely that sequence, to a sequence which leaves out only the non-primes, and it's difficult to imagine some scientific law containing a variable ranging only over primes. Finding that a message began with groups of prime-numbered pulses, in order, would be a sure sign that an intelligence was its source. (Of course, something might be the product of an intelligent being even though it didn't exhibit such an abstract pattern. But a being wishing to be known to others would do well to include one.) With alacrity, the theologians jumped on this idea, gaining their first National Science Foundation grant. Among themselves they called their project "Hunting for God," and the idea (about which other theologians had their reservations) was to look at the fundamental lineaments and structures of the universe, the clustering of galaxies, relationships among elementary particles, fundamental physical constants and their relationships, etc., searching for some abstract non-causal pattern. Were one found, one could conclude that a designing intelligence lay behind it. Of course, it had to be decided precisely which abstract patterns would count, and which features of the universe were fundamental enough. Discovering prime-numbered heaps of sand on some heretofore uninhabited island wouldn't do the trick, since one would expect to find something like that somewhere or other; what the significance would be of finding such patterns in cortical functioning or in the structure of DNA was a matter of dispute, with those viewing man as no more fundamental than the heaps of sand accusing their opponents of anthropocentrism. Theologians establishing the Reverend Thomas Bayes Society became expert in forming complex and intricate probability calculations and in debating delicate issues about assigning *a priori* probabilities. The results of the "Hunting for God" project being well known, no more need be said here.

The initial excitement aroused by the Interstellar Communications Project was connected with a vague hope that other beings would enlighten people about the meaning and purpose of life, or with the hope that at least people would learn they weren't alone. (No one explained why the "we" group wouldn't just expand, leaving people plus the others still quite alone.) After the project was set up, the best scientists went on to other more challenging tasks, leaving the rest to wait and listen. They listened and they examined and

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they computed and they waited. No qualifying abstract pattern was detected, nor was any message that looked intelligent even minus such a pattern. Since newsmen do not find a uniform diet of "no progress" reinforcing, the project was reduced, in order to fill the auditorium for their third annual press conference, to inviting reporters from college newspapers, Sisterhood bulletins, and the like. Up gets this woman to ask why they should expect to hear anything; after all, they were only just listening and not doing any sending, why wouldn't everyone be doing the same?; maybe everyone else was just listening also and no one was sending any messages.

It is difficult to believe that the project had reached this point without anyone's having thought about why or whether extraterrestrial beings would want to try to make their presence known to others. Even though during the Congressional debate on the subject, in all the newspaper columns and editorials, no one once suggested setting up a transmitting station, no questioner asked whether other beings would. Little thought is required to realize that it would be dangerous simply to start sending out messages announcing one's existence. You don't know who or what is out there, who might come calling to enslave you, or eat you, or exhibit you, or experiment on you, or toy with you. Prudence dictates, at a minimum, listening in for a while to find out if other parties are safe and friendly, before making your presence known. Though if the other parties are at all clever, they would send reassuring messages whatever their intentions. They most certainly would not beam out TV signals showing themselves killing and eating various intelligently behaving foreigners. And if they're really clever, then (by hypothesis) they'll succeed in deceiving anyone not adhering to a policy of staying silent no matter what. Such considerations were neither explicitly formulated nor publicly expounded, but it must have been some feeling about the foolhardiness of broadcasting first (how else can one account for it?) that led to the notable but not-then-noted absence of proposals to establish broadcasting stations in addition to the listening posts.

ONCE again the project was a topic of conversation. "Of course," everyone said, "it's ridiculous to expect anyone to broadcast; it's too dangerous. No interplanetary, interstellar, intergalactic civilization, however far advanced, will broadcast. For they won't know that an even more advanced and hostile civilization isn't lurking at the other end of their communications beam." Interest in flying-saucer reports diminished considerably when the conclusion was drawn that the sending out of observation ships presents hazards similar to those of broadcasting messages, since the process of a ship's returning information to its source can be tracked. (Even if a ship were designed to give information to its makers by *not* transmitting any physical signal, or even returning to its base, there must be some contingencies under which it *would* do so, since nothing can be learned from a detection device that gives the same response no matter what it detects.) It was said that if its planning committee had included some psychologists or game-theorists or even kids from street gangs in addition to the scientists and engineers, the project never would have gotten started in the first place. The legislature wouldn't openly admit its blunder by ending the project completely. Instead they cut its funds. They did not authorize the broadcasting of messages. The members of the staff had various reasons for staying with the project ranging, one mordantly remarked, from masochism to catatonia. All in all, they found their jobs agreeable. Like night clerks in completely empty resort hotels, they read and thought and coped comfortably with the lack of outside stimulation. In that manner the project continued, serenely, for another eight years, with only a few comedians desperate for material giving it any mention at all; until the receipt of the first message.

Studious observation of reversals in public opinion and their accompanying commentaries has never been known to enhance anyone's respect for the public's intellectual integrity. (As for its intelligence, this would be a late date, indeed, to proclaim the news that the public adopts a view only after it is already known to be false or inadequate, or to note the general inability to distinguish between the first-person present tense of the verb "to believe" and the verb "to know.") People just refuse to admit that they have changed their minds, that they have made a mistake. So the very same people who said at first, "How exciting, I wonder when the messages will begin arriving," and who later said, "How silly to listen for a message; it's too dangerous for anyone to broadcast," now said, after the receipt of the first message, "Of course a civilization *will* broadcast, even though it's dangerous, if it's even more dangerous for it not to broadcast."

The first message picked up and decoded was a call for help. They were threatened by a coming supernova outburst of their star. No spaceships could escape the wide perimeter of destruction in time, and in any case they could not evacuate all of their population. Could anyone advise them about what to do, how to harness their star to prevent the outburst? Their astronomical observations had shown them that occasionally such outbursts didn't take place as predicted, and since they could discover no alternative explanation for this anomaly, they thought it possible that some civilizations had mastered a technique of inhibiting them. If no one told them how to do it, or came to their aid, they were doomed.

Over the next year and a half they beamed out their literature, their history, their accumulated wisdom, their jokes, their sage's sayings, their scientific theories, their hopes. Mankind was engulfed in this concentrated effulgence of a whole

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civilization, enthralled, purified, and ennobled. To many they became a model, an inspiration. Their products were treasured and they were loved. Did they view this outpouring as a gift to others, an inducement for others to help, a distillation for its own sake of the essence of themselves? No person knew or was prone to speculate as each, silently with them, awaited their tragedy. Never before had the whole of humanity been so greatly moved; never before had persons been so jointly elevated as in experiencing these beings.

At the end of a year and a half came a renewed call for aid; and in addition a call for some response, even from those lacking technical knowledge to help with the supernova. They wanted, they said, to know their messages had been received and understood, to know that what they held most important and dear would be preserved. They wanted to know, as they died, that others knew of them, that what they had done would continue, that it would not be as if they had never existed at all.

Only to the misanthropic can the ensuing debate have brought pleasure, the debate that raged among persons, and within some.

"It might be a trick, don't reply, it's too dangerous."

"Beings capable of *that* civilization couldn't be up to trickery."

"Perhaps they are quoting another civilization they've conquered, or an earlier phase of their own; Nazis could and would quote Goethe."

"Even if they're not tricking us, perhaps some other aggressive civilization will overhear our message to them."

"How can we let them perish without responding?"

"If we could help them escape their fate then certainly we should send a message telling them what to do, even though this would mean running serious risks. But we can't help them, and we shouldn't run risks merely in order to bid them a sentimental farewell."

"We can save them from believing, as they die, that they are sinking into oblivion."

"Why the irrational desire to leave a trace behind? What can that add to what they've already accomplished? If eventually the last living being in the universe dies, will that mean that the lives of all the rest have been meaningless? (Or is it vanishing without trace while others still remain on that is objectionable?)"

"How shall we face our children if we don't respond?"

"Will we have grandchildren to face if we do respond?"

No government sent a message. The United Nations issued a proclamation beginning with a lot of "whereas"'s but containing near the close a gathering of "inasmuch"'s so it didn't proclaim its proclamation of regret very loudly. But it did issue an order, in its stated role as guardian of the interests of the earth as a whole, that no one endanger the others by replying. Some disobeyed, using makeshift transmitters, but these were seized quickly, and their signals were too weak to reach their destination intact through the interstellar noise.

Thus began the grim watch and countdown. Watching for their rescue, listening for some word to them from elsewhere. Waiting for their doom. The time, for which their astronomers and earth's also had predicted the supernova outburst, arrived. Some persons paused, some prayed, some wept. All waited, still.

The existence of a finite limit to the velocity of causal signals had been of some interest to physicists. Epistemologists had worried their little heads over the question of whether what is seen must be simultaneous with the seeing of it, or whether people can see far into the past. Now came the turn of the rest. The fate of that distant planet was already settled, one way or the other, but knowledge of it was not. So the wait continued.

For another year and a quarter, remembering their debates, mulling over their actions and inactions, contemplating the universe, and themselves, and the others, people waited. Poetically just things could have happened. A message could have arrived saying it was humanity that had been tested, it was the sun that was due to outburst, and since the earth's people hadn't ventured to render others aid or comfort, others would not help them. Or, they could have been rescued. (How greatly relieved people then would have felt about themselves. Yet why should someone else's later acts so alter one's feelings about one's own?) But the universe, it would appear, is not a poem. No messages to them were detected. Light from the outbursting of their star reached earth as their broadcasts (should they have terminated them a year and a quarter before the end?), as their broadcasts and their plays and their science and their philosophy, their hopes and their fears and their courage and their living glow ended.

Some people used to think it would be terrible to discover that human beings were the only intelligent beings in the universe, because this would lead to feelings of loneliness on a cosmic scale. Others used to think that discovering intelligent beings elsewhere would remove their own last trace of uniqueness and make them feel insignificant. No one, it seems, had ever speculated on how it would feel to allow another civilization to vanish feeling lonely, insignificant, abandoned. No one had described the horrendousness of realizing that the surrounding civilizations are like one's own; of realizing that each neighbor remaining in the universe, each of the only other ones there are, is a mute cold wall. Limitless emitlessness. Lacking even the comfort of deserving better, facing an inhabited void.

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The Sorrows of American-Jewish Poetry

Harold Bloom

AMERICAN-JEWISH literature, in English, began most inauspiciously with the verse of Emma Lazarus, whose intentions were noble, but who rarely rose even to the level of the English Romantic poet, Mrs. Felicia Hemans (whose much-mourned early loss, popularity, and general badness might inspire us to term her the Sylvia Plath of her age). Unfortunately, Emma Lazarus was an involuntary prophet, for though it causes me real grief to say this, the achievement of American-Jewish poets down to the present moment remains a modest and mixed one. There are no Bellows or Malamuds among them, though there are a few signs that this melancholy estimate some day may need to be revised upward.

I wish to be precise about this; there are a number of good poets, in several generations, with a particularly thick concentration of those now in their late thirties or early forties. As a broad grouping they compare favorably enough with most of what is now going. But no poet with the high individuality of the major sequence of modern American poets—E. A. Robinson, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, T. S. Eliot, John Crowe Ransom, Conrad Aiken, E. E. Cummings, Hart Crane, Theodore Roethke, Elizabeth Bishop—seems likely to emerge from among them, any more than a single American-Jewish poet of undoubted major status has established himself in a century now more than two-thirds gone. I would find it irrational to suppose that this is accidental (though I would be pleased to believe that) and I turn to the process of critical surmise so as to attempt to account for so melancholy a phenomenon.

A comparison with Yiddish poetry, so much of the best of which has been written in America, seems to me an inevitable starting point. Moshe Leib Halpern and Mani Leib at the least—probably also H. Leivick and Jacob Glatstein—are more impressive poets, in my experience as a reader, than any American-Jewish poet who has written in English. This is not to sentimentalize the legitimate if strictly limited achievement of even the best Yiddish poets, but only to recognize the self-truncation, the uneasiness, the inhibiting and poetically destructive excessive self-consciousness of American-Jewish poetry. Admirers of Charles Reznikoff, Louis Zukofsky, Delmore Schwartz, Howard Nemerov, and the many Jewish poets of the generation after would dissent from my general judgment, but a dispassionate view of the matter will sustain my sorrowful conclusion. There have been, and go on being, very good minor poets aplenty, but the more deeply one reads in them the more they do tend to merge into one another. Those who stand out, like the mock-bardic Allen Ginsberg, are distinctive primarily by being egregious, like Norman Mailer in his prose and his public manifestations.

In his new book on American-Jewish literature, Allen Guttmann, sensitively and accurately perplexed, asks: "But where are the poets?" and comes up with Karl Shapiro and two poets of my own generation, Irving Feldman and John Hollander, all of whom he discusses quite usefully.* I will consider these, and add a number besides, but am compelled still to stay a while longer with the problem: Why haven't the poets been better?

The most distinguished Jewish poet writing in English in this century was clearly the Londoner Isaac Rosenberg, killed in World War I at the age of twenty-seven. Rosenberg's strength is not in the famous "Trench Poems," but in a handful of quasi-biblical fragments, such as this:

A worm fed on the heart of Corinth,
Babylon and Rome:
Not Paris raped tall Helen,
But this incestuous worm,
Who lured her vivid beauty
To his amorphous sleep.
England! famous as Helen
Is thy betrothal sung
To him the shadowless,
More amorous than Solomon.

It isn't often one can call a prophetic fragment Blake-like, and be observing with accuracy, yet here Rosenberg deserves the comparison. The

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poem turns on the fine play between "amorphous" and "amorous," the gently sinister introduction of the shadowless Satan, and the evocation of sexual excess in a continuum from Corinth to Solomon. Taken together with the subtle indirection of the prophetic warning to turn now, before the betrothal is consummated, these moral insights fuse into a powerful Hebraic pattern. Where, in his non-biblical poems, Rosenberg rarely could arrive at mature terms with his English literary influences, his biblical fragments do show the achievement of a poetry firmly Jewish.

The closest American equivalent to Rosenberg was the even more tragic Samuel Greenberg, brought to the United States from Vienna in 1900, at the age of seven, to endure the Lower East Side and to die of tuberculosis at twenty-three. Greenberg is remembered today only because Hart Crane read his poems in manuscript, and reworked some of them in the lyric "Emblems of Conduct" and in the "Voyages." Educated only through the seventh grade, Greenberg found his precursor by reading Emerson, whose essays and poems are echoed all through Greenberg's work. Amazingly, Greenberg was a true prophet of the direction the best American-Jewish writing would take, for it seems clear today that Bellow, Malamud, and the better poets maturing now, constitute a variety of American Romanticism, an amalgamation of Emerson's "optative mood" with the moral pressures of Jewish tradition. Sometimes in Greenberg the amalgamation results, not surprisingly, in moving parallels to Emily Dickinson, as in "Regret at Parting":

"Our God!" in prayer is said;
"Our child!" announced so, too—
And its senses that grasp your heart
That travels through speechless awe.
Beware of the intellectual, changing mood
That trembles a universe afar:
Deep in thy shadowed soul
Immortal creatings are!

. . . . . .

O friend, a pardon in a reviewed past,
That inner selfish brand
The Almighty has deemed to brush our path;
Soon we part—I grasp thy hand!

The formal inadequacy is clear enough, but so is the subtle probing of a profound and desperate religious temperament. When, in a double handful of Emersonian lyrics, Greenberg overcomes his formal limitations, something close to greatness in the visionary mode is given to us. Here is "The Glass Bubbles," Greenberg's version of the "transparent eyeball" of Emerson's *Nature*:

The motion of gathering loops of water
Must either burst or remain in a moment.
The violet colors through the glass
Throw up little swellings that appear
And spatter as soon as another strikes
And is born; so pure are they of colored
Hues, that we feel the absent strength
Of its power. When they begin they gather
Like sand on the beach: each bubble
Contains a complete eye of water.

The immense sorrow of the transitoriness, the ebb answering the flow, of Emersonian vision and inspiration, has never been set down so gently or so persuasively. Elsewhere, anticipating Crane, Greenberg found inevitable expression for the fate of Emerson's Orphic Bard when fallen upon evil days:

I live in an age where the age lives alone,
And lonesome doth it rage
Where the Bard dare not come.

But what is Jewish about the poetry of the Emersonian Greenberg? The God he addresses, who is not a Person in whom a believer has faith, but the God of the Torah, beyond personality, in Whose Way Greenberg must try to walk. In his many plangent, unfinished, frequently incoherent hymns to this God, Greenberg sought to win acceptance of poverty, illness, early death, but achieved only the brave pathos of a tempered anguish.

GREENBERG died just after the fashions of literary modernism had begun to inundate America and Britain, and he was strangely fortunate in his self-education, for the writers who moved him—Keats, Shelley, Thoreau, Emerson above all—were none of them inimical to the relative naturalism and humanism of Jewish tradition. American-Jewish poets from the 20's down to the present day have found themselves, more often than not, in the dilemma of Hart Crane: how can one accommodate one's vision to the metric and rhetoric of Eliot, Pound, Williams, and their followers? Poets as various as Charles Reznikoff and Delmore Schwartz, despite all their gifts, failed finally as poets for lacking a language appropriate to their desired stance. Reznikoff, whose selected volume, *By The Waters of Manhattan*, is nevertheless an impressive testament, should have been the American-Jewish poet in whom younger writers could find a precursor of real strength. A few writers of talent have found aid in Reznikoff, but prolonged reading in him depresses me with the sense of unnecessary loss. Why attempt to translate Yehudah Halevi into the idiom of Pound and William Carlos Williams? Is the form of this in any way appropriate to its burden?

My heart in the East
and I at the farthest West:
how can I taste what I eat or find it sweet
while Zion
is in the cords of Edom and I
bound by the Arab?
Beside the dust of Zion
all the good of Spain is light;
and a light thing to leave it.

In one poem, Reznikoff sadly and accurately

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remarks that he has "married the speech of strangers," and he tends to be most moving when he studies the nostalgias:

My grandfathers were living streams
in the channel of a broad river;
but I am a stream that must find its way
among blocking rock
and through sands and sand.

The principal name among American-Jewish poets in the generation after Reznikoff is clearly that of Delmore Schwartz, where the inherited idiom is Eliot's, rather than Pound's or Williams's. But, like so many poets of his generation (Stanley Kunitz, Howard Nemerov, Ben Belitt), Schwartz curiously evaded whatever Jewish concerns existed in his consciousness. The exception in Schwartz is the patriarchal figure of Abraham, who enters the early poem, "For the One Who Would Not Take His Life in His Hands," is oddly invoked in tandem with Orpheus in another poem, and then makes one of a trilogy of three late poems, together with "Sarah" and "Jacob." Schwartz's "Abraham" is impressive work, except that the irrelevance of the precursor who found Schwartz makes again, as in the Jewish poems of Reznikoff and Louis Zukofsky, for a disturbing incongruity between style and imaginative attitude. With Isaac restored to him, Abraham sums up his life in the accents of the late T. S. Eliot:

And I am not gratified
Nor astonished. It has never been otherwise:
Exiled, wandering, dumbfounded by riches,
Estranged among strangers, dismayed by the infinite sky,
An alien to myself until at last the caste of the last alienation
The angel of death comes to make the alienated and indestructible one a part of his famous society.

Clearly there is a peculiar problem of poetic influence at work among American-Jewish poets. Strong poets tend to achieve an individualized voice by first all-but-merging with a precursor and then by pulling away from him, usually by way of a complex process of fault-finding and actual misinterpretation of the precursor. All post-Enlightenment poetry in English tends to be a displaced Protestantism anyway, so that the faith in a Person easily enough is displaced into an initial devotion to the god-like precursor poet. This, to understate it, is hardly a very Jewish process, and yet something like it seems necessary if poets are to continue to be incarnated. However far from Jewish tradition they may be, something recalcitrant in the spirit of young Jewish poets prevents them from so initially wholehearted a surrender to a Gentile precursor, and indeed makes them nervous about the process itself. Displaced Judaism tends to become one or another kind of a moralism, but not the pragmatic religion-of-poetry that young poets, for a time, must accept.

A GLANCE at two poetical Shapiros—Karl and the less-well-known but more interesting Harvey—can begin to test my speculations, before I move on to my own generation of poets—Irving Feldman, John Hollander, Richard Howard, Allen Grossman, Edward Field, Robert Mezey, and a few others, including the celebrated Ginsberg.

Mr. Guttmann sensibly points out that Karl Shapiro, who has been so fierce against modernist literary criticism, nevertheless "offered a metaphoric defense of peoplehood." The defense in fact, as John Hollander noted in a 1958 review of Shapiro's *Poems of a Jew,* just barely dodged "a stereotyped Gentile intellectual's view of Jew as victor-victim." Right now, Shapiro's defense seems to me to have been merely absurd. In justice to Shapiro, I quote from his Preface:

> . . . the modern Jew, insofar as he is a Jew, remains intransigent and thankless, man in all his raw potentiality. . . . He is man left over, after everything that can happen has happened.

Nothing is more self-deceptive for any Jewish writer than the notion that he can define the Jew. Whatever else is possible for him, it is hardly given to him that he may forge the uncreated conscience of his people, the people of the Book and of the *halakhah.* When Saul Bellow, with his customary and invariable wisdom, wished to create a hero with "raw potentiality" or "man left over," he gave us Henderson, a pure Emersonian and Gentile American. Whatever else it is that a Jew may be, his tradition cannot allow him to be Natural Man alone.

The best of Karl Shapiro's overtly Jewish poems is probably "The Synagogue," yet even here the reader confronts a curious mixture of sentimentalism, misinformation about Judaism, and the by now too familiar incongruity of an overtly Jewish stance being rendered in an alien idiom, here that of W. H. Auden and Louis MacNeice. Even more bothersome is the technique of defining what is Jewish by seeing it only as the negation of the Catholic:

Our wine is wine, our bread is harvest bread
That feeds the body and is not the body.
Our blessing is to wine but not the blood
Nor to sangreal the sacred dish. We bless
The whiteness of the dish and bless the water
And are not anthropaphagous to him.

Harvey Shapiro's poetry, so much of which turns upon Jewish themes, lacks only a language adequate to its genuine and accurate apprehensions of Jewish dilemmas. Its style goes back to Williams, by way of the school of Reznikoff, Zukofsky, George Oppen, and the spareness of this style is rarely adequate to Harvey Shapiro's own intensities. I read this poet's major collections

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(*Battle Report*: *Selected Poems* and *This World*) with continuous sympathy, but longing also to hear him speak out in a more expressionistic, highly colored, biblicizing idiom than he can bear to allow himself. Take as a characteristic poem by him, "The Way," from *This World*:

Why are you crying in Israel,
Brother, I ask as I switch over
To the emergency oxygen.
Do we have to dig up all
The Freudian plumbing
To reconstruct our lives?
If I had clean air like you
I think I could breathe.
As it is my mouthpiece keeps
Clogging and my eyes blur.
I can barely make it
Between the desks.
And you, walking
Between orange trees
Among the companions,
And still so far from the way.

With its fine economy, this parable conveys rather more than the climactic Israeli scenes of Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*. The "Way" is *halakhah* or right conduct, based on a Mishnaic word meaning "to walk." As a poet, knowing that "my mouthpiece keeps/Clogging," Shapiro laments the universality of the departure from *halakhah*, as far away in Israel as in America. Spare and moving as the poem is, the deep reader in me wants more, and laments the attachment of Shapiro to so minimal a modernist tradition, so sadly lacking in the rhetorical resources that his insights desperately require.

Richard Howard, taking a retrospective view of his own book *Alone With America* ("essays on the art of poetry in the United States since 1950") notes that fifteen out of the forty-one poets surveyed are Jews, and concludes that they have "a certain ease within the alienation of poetry" and that they move "upon the Word naturally, by tradition, as it were." This is handsomely said, and completely untrue, as I have been trying to demonstrate. The Jewish poets Howard studies fall into the two patterns described above. Either they evade or ignore their Jewishness (for many, of course, it hardly exists) or they confront the fearful problem of expressing their cultural diversity in the essentially hostile idiom bequeathed them by the various modernist or post-modernist masters. Howard himself, who has emerged in the dramatic monologues of *Untitled Subjects* and *Findings* as the best modern continuator of Browning, has only one poem on a Jewish theme, the remarkable "A Montefiore Memorandum," an urbanely bitter meditation on Wagner's hatred for Meyerbeer.

As I contemplate the poets of my own generation, I find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Jews among them work on under peculiarly internalized disadvantages. The clearest achievements of the poetic generation already seem to center elsewhere, in A. R. Ammons, John Ashbery, W. S. Merwin, Mark Strand, James Wright, among others. When Sidney Hook lucidly protested Sartre's notion that Jewish authenticity was dependent upon the self-acceptance of ancestral identity, he movingly spoke of giving all individuals "the right to freely determine themselves as Jews or Gentiles, as citizens of one country or another, as cultural heirs of Socrates or Aquinas. . . ." But poets are not citizens or cultural heirs in any philosophic sense; they do not choose their tradition but must be chosen by it. Most directly, they require *to be found by* the inevitable, the liberating precursor, if ever they are to be capable of finding themselves at all.

Of the poets of his generation, Irving Feldman has been the most directly Jewish in his thematic concerns. His first book, *Works and Days*, all but drowns in the turbulence of these concerns, while his second, *The Pripet Marshes*, does drown, engulfed by his temerity in taking the Holocaust as subject. Elie Wiesel, Paul Celan, Nelly Sachs can touch the horror with authority, but British and American writers need to avoid it, as we have no warrant for imagination in that most terrible of areas. Feldman becomes both a serious and a vitally Jewish poet only in his recent volume, *Magic Papers*, which Mr. Guttmann finds "almost entirely without reference to Jewishness." The long title-poem, as well as "The Word" and "The Father," are extraordinary efforts to recapture a lost relation to living tradition. Necessarily, Feldman quests for an appropriate voice ("My voice/ is thick, is mud,/my depth of anguish is/my depth of reservation./I detest the wryness of my voice,/its ulteriority, its suffering/—what is not lived only/can suffer so.") The quest is answered in "Psalm," Feldman's best poem, where a massive and disciplined anguish mounts from its initial recognition: "There is no singing without God" to a final stanza in which the poet does stand at the turning:

But if I enter, vanished bones
of the broken temple, lost people,
and go in the sanctum of the scattered
house, saying words like these,
forgive—my profaneness is
insufferable to me—and bless, make fertile
my words, give them a radiant burden!
Do not deny your blessing, speak to us.

Feldman is evidently in the midst of the difficult process of becoming a genuinely devotional poet, within the immense grandeur of his tradition, now rendered all but inaccessible by the circumstances of history. John Hollander, a skeptical polymath, has no way back to Judaism, but is ruggedly and constantly aware of the burdens of his almost-lost tradition. His autobiographical long poem of 1965, *Visions from the*

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Ramble, attains one of its visionary climaxes on Tisha B'av, mingling the Lamentation of Jeremiah with the prophecy of ruin for New York as the Newer Jerusalem:

But here in this room, when the last
Touches of red in the sky have sunk, these few men, lumped
Toward the end away from the windows, some with bleachy white
Handkerchiefs comically knotted at each corner, worn
In place of black skullcaps, read what was wailed at a wall
In the most ruined of cities. Only the City is missing.

It is in *The Night Mirror,* his recent volume, that Hollander emerges as a fully integrated poet, who can deal with the very diverse elements of his own consciousness, including his Jewish heritage. "At The New Year" is a powerful secularization of that celebration, and an extraordinary poem addressed to Borges on the Golem vividly recreates the world of "my ancestor, the Rabbi Loew of Prague." The almost-Yiddish lyric, "The Long and the Short of It," ends in the mode of Ecclesiastes: "They who look out of/The windows are darkened," and the same plangency is conveyed by the immensely somber closing lyric, "As the Sparks Fly Upward." The operative influence upon so many of the poems in *The Night Mirror* is Yiddish poetry, particularly the work of M. L. Halpern and of Mani Leib. Included in the volume are versions of two of Halpern's most mordant pieces, "The Will" and "The Bird" and Mani Leib's poignant "I Am." Readers consulting *A Treasury of Yiddish Poetry,* edited by Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg, will discover that Hollander's translations are one of the staples of the volume. Abraham Reisen, Leib, Halpern, Itzik Feffer, Jacob Sternberg, A. Glanz-Leyeles, Eliezer Steinberg, Eliezer Greenberg, Aaron Zeitlin—Hollander renders all of them with remarkable diversity, vividness, and particularity. I am reminded of the vigor and sense of release that Rossetti attained in his translations of Italian poetry. It is no insult to Rossetti to see that his version of Dante's strong sestina, "To the Dim Light and the Hard Circle of Shade," is his strongest poem, and similarly I do not dispraise Hollander in judging his version of Halpern's "The Bird" to be his best work so far. I give only the first two stanzas of this superb phantasmagoria:

Well, this bird comes, and under his wing is a crutch
And he asks why I keep my door on the latch;
So I tell him that right outside the gate
Many robbers watch and wait
To get at the hidden bit of cheese,
Under my ass, behind my knees.
Then through the keyhole and the crack in the jamb
The bird bawls out he's my brother Sam,
And tells me I'll never begin to believe
How sorely he was made to grieve
On shipboard, where he had to ride
Out on deck, he says, from the other side.

In the grotesque power of Halpern's mode, as in the very different poignance of Mani Leib, Hollander has begun to be discovered by precursors wholly available to his imaginative needs. For Halpern and Leib, in the full context of American literature, are minor but authentic late Romantics, desperately defrauded seers of a transcendental vision. Hollander's own subsequent development is likely to come somewhere in the broad currents of American Romantic tradition.

THOUGH no other poets of their generation seem to have progressed as far as Feldman and Hollander in solving the Jewish-American apparent dichotomy, several deserve consideration as working at the problem. Edward Field's astonishing "Mark Twain and Sholem Aleichem," a brilliant invention, takes the two writers to Coney Island, where "pretty soon they were both floundering in the sea." Field's closing vision is precariously balanced between affection and despair:

They had both spent their lives trying to make the world a better place
And both had gently faced their failure.
If humor and love had failed, what next?
They were both drowning and enjoying it now,
Two old men of the two worlds, the old and the new,
Splashing about in the sea like crazy monks.

So memorable an extinction of two literary fathers can be balanced against Allen Ginsberg's many lame invocations of his own literary fathers as the ever-living. The chanter of *Howl, Kaddish,* and many lesser litanies is as much beyond the reach of criticism as Norman Mailer; both have been raised to that bad eminence where every fresh failure is certain of acclaim as an event, something that has happened and so is news, like floods, fires, and other stimulating disasters. The genuine painfulness of reading through *Kaddish* is not an *imaginative* suffering for the reader, but is precisely akin to the agony we sustain when we are compelled to watch the hysteria of strangers. Still, time will judge against us on Ginsberg as, I believe, on Mailer; for here and now, it is sufficient firmly to note Ginsberg's irrelevance to the achievement I seek to sketch.

It seems clear to me that American-Jewish poetry as it moves into maturity will become more and more overtly a blend of a devotional strain and a late Romantic visionary intensity. These are representative excerpts, all of considerable distinction:

You will awaken with the dignity
Of beauty still upon you, and go forth
Like one who has not long since worshipped.

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It will be like some mysterious Sabbath
When the Book was taken from the Ark,
The crown, the breastplate with its wreath of bells,
And all the royalty that hides the Law
Opened and laid aside, and you knew the words,
As a man knows a woman who is raven haired and odorous,
You will be as infinite as your desire
Knowing the Law is young and beautiful
When you awake one morning in your cold hotel
After a night of vision.
—Allen Grossman, "The Law"

Some other side of memory
And nothing still to think;
The soul consumed a heaviness
Of thirst it couldn't drink. . . .
—Alvin Feinman, "Covenant"

How rarely your mercy visits me,
My king, my father;
And so, most of my days, I am your wandering son
Who has cast his lot like a prophet
In the desert of his days.

And your deliverance that comes to me then,
My father, my king,
Is like a well that the wanderer came on at last,
When he had almost prayed for death from thirst
And the heat that shrivels the body.
—Robert Mezey, "On the Equator"

After he had maimed the dragon deep
and throned us in new limbs of everlasting
opening to fable the mortal stars
we wept praises and harped the flood of his word.
Our tears might have filled an ocean
our blood a sea.
We followed or wantoned before him,
He was our serpent, flexible and brazen,
on his broad back we crossed the seas
or stood precipitously between worlds.
Come now, with a staunch heart, a steady love,
redeem his river-bones from Egypt,
fetch home his visions, and out of his grave
make a vineyard to plant the voice of the dove.
—Geoffrey Hartman, "Mariner's Song"

For all their differences, particularly in style, these passages move toward a common thematic center, which they share with Feldman's "Psalm." There is no recovery of covenant, of the Law, without confronting again, in all deep tribulation, the God of the Fathers, Who is beyond image as He is beyond personality, and Who can be met only by somehow again walking His Way. For all our mutual deep skepticisms, the increasing enterprise of American-Jewish poetry is what it must be: persistence in seeking to recover what once our ancestors had. The motto for that poetry's future can be taken from Rabbi Tarphon: "You are not required to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it."

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The New Pluralists

Harold R. Isaacs

ONE THING that came out of the sense of all American things falling apart in the last few years was a new view of the so-called "Middle Americans." This term has been loosely and variously defined. Most of the time, the term is used primarily to refer to the great blue-collar class of American working people. This is the part of the population that does most of the nation's hard work, has given up most of the young men killed and wounded in Vietnam, paid most heavily for the war-caused inflation, provided the firemen hit by rock-throwers in the ghettos, and most of the policemen called "pigs" by black extremists and youth revolters, and has offered the most resistance to encroachments by emerging blacks on their neighborhoods and their jobs.

The "new" view is a double one. In the first, they are seen no longer just as racist bigots standing in the way of black progress—which is how liberals and radicals have been wont to see them—but as people with deep and grievous problems of their own, trying under great pressure to defend what they have won by hard work and still trying to achieve the American dream as they still dream it. In the second view in this finder, they appear as *ethnics.* Some forty million "Middle Americans" are of what the census calls "foreign stock," i.e., with one foreign-born parent. The number must at least double when you take in the added generations a step or two more removed from the original Irish, Italian, Polish, German, Czech, Ukrainian, Slovak, Hungarian, and other immigrants.

This fresh look at these Americans has by now been taken in a flood of articles, papers, and books during the last three or four years. Its attempt to take a more sympathetic view of blue-collar ethnic bigotry has had a celebrated success in the appearance of Archie Bunker, TV superstar. It has figured in different ways in many different political calculations and outcomes. As union labor, this body of Americans was the solid bloc on which the Democratic party built its Left-of-Center coalition beginning in Roosevelt's days. Many in the old New Deal-liberal-labor-civil-rights coalition had reason to fear that the bond was breaking on the rocks of racial conflict, that this class would take its mounting stresses and grievances down the road behind some demagogue like Wallace to some new American right-wingism. To go on seeing these masses of working people simply as bigots and cretins, it began to be understood, would only give flesh and substance to the grim specter of polarization and escalated racial and other group conflict that hung so heavily over the country as the 1960's ended.

This began to lead to reassessments, some of which have conveniently been brought together in *Overcoming Middle-Class Rage,* a volume of articles and excerpts from assorted speeches and books.* All but a few of them date from 1969 and 1970 when tensions over the campus anti-war revolt, Black Pantherism, ghetto tensions, and the law-and-order issue had reached certain peaks. The collection is edited by Murray Friedman of the American Jewish Committee whose National Project on Ethnic America, headed by Irving Levine, had much to do, beginning in 1968, with opening and spurring discussion of this matter in forums and consultations around the country. Friedman writes the main thematic pieces in the book, with others grouped in a first section that attempts to describe "Middle America"; a section on "Middle America vs. the Liberal Culture," which includes Rudolph Vecoli's article on "Ethnicity, A Neglected Dimension of American History," in its way the sharpest and best piece in the book (also featured here are Daniel P. Moynihan's pre-inaugural memo to President Nixon, and excerpts from Eric Hoffer's diary); a discussion of "The New Pluralism" with contributions by the late David Danzig, Father Andrew Greeley, and Irving Levine and Judith Herman; and others.

The two themes—of the Middle American as a harassed man and as an ethnic—are presented here as if they go together and, indeed, as if they harmonize. They are in fact tunes beaten out by separate drummers who march down quite different roads. In effect, the appeal here to the Middle American is to *depolarize* on social issues and to *repolarize* ethnically. This may make beautiful music in the heads of some of these composers, but it has to be played out loud to hear what it actually sounds like.

The appeal to depolarize is the eminently sensible appeal for building new bridges between whites and blacks on the basis of common needs. It calls on them to stop fighting each other for the same slice of pie but to fight together for a larger pie, to seek gains not at each other's expense but gains for all. This is sensible doctrine and was sensible when it first appeared a while ago under the formula "unity of the working class" and despite a lot of

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unhappy history, it is still good doctrine, still at least a consummation devoutly to be sought. The obstacles are as great as or greater than they ever were, but it is clear that if these American workers go on thinking that the AFL-CIO has carried things far enough and that all will be well if only no one disturbs them, then worse, not better, obviously lies ahead for us all.

At the same time these Middle Americans, indeed all Americans, are called upon to reassert and reestablish their ethnic separateness. The drummers who beat *this* drum march down any number of separate roads, and each can be playing a bright and satisfying tune full of love and peace and enhancement until two such roads intersect, which they usually do. Then, the record shows, there is invariably trouble at the crossroads.

To be sure, those who believe a broad ethnic resurgence in America would be good for us all are trying to imagine ways of stopping that trouble at the crossroads. They are thinking not only of a "new pluralism" but also of a new ethnicity, with all its positive values retained and its poisons somehow extracted, or at least reduced in virulence. Father Greeley tells us that he is personally convinced that "suspicion and mistrust are not . . . inevitable." If they can be eliminated, he goes on, ethnicity enriches life. Unfortunately, he must add, "no one has yet figured out the formula for doing so." What Father Greeley, Msgr. Baroni, and the staff of the American Jewish Committee —all earnest, serious, honorable, well-intentioned people—are trying to do is to find such a formula. Since all of them are religio-ethnics, one can wish them Godspeed. Meanwhile, one has to go on worrying about the ethnic poisons as well as the ethnic virtues, and one has to worry too about some of the thinking that goes into the formula-seeking.

THIS new spur to resurgent ethnicity owes most, it is clear, to the "black revolution," its aggressive reassertion and acceptance of blackness, hitherto the badge itself of external and internal servitude, the deeply urgent insistence now that black, on the contrary, was beautiful. With this had to go the search to rediscover who and what black Americans are, what they hold in common besides their physical characteristics out of their long and unique history. This process could only begin at the new thresholds opened by the victory of the civil-rights revolution. It goes on alongside all the other difficult consequences, the coming into the open of all the accumulated pathologies of centuries of imposed second-classness and poverty. It breaks out into rashes of violence and social disruption. It leads some into angry and fearful withdrawals, more psychologically real than politically realistic, while others—better reflecting the dogged will of the mass of black Americans for saner solutions—begin to move across the thresholds of greater opportunity, with most of their problems unsolved and the obstacles still mountainous.

The new black militancy triggered similar impulses in other non-white American minorities. Indeed, through the great shaking up and shaking out of all group relationships, it has forced *all* Americans to redefine who and what they are and what it does mean or can mean to be American. The black militants who started all this began by throwing off the white helping hands of the civil-rights period and this served to turn around some of the now organizationally and emotionally unemployed civil-rights fighters, rudely enjoined to go heal themselves. The young white civil-righters had the fight against the war to join, the campus revolt to mount, the counter-culture to experiment with, and some moved through all these passages to their own versions of ethnic reassertion, all the way from the Jesus freaks to the numbers of young Jews turned off by anti-Semitic black and white radicalism to rediscover what there might be for them in their Jewishness. Thus too a Geno Baroni, turning to find good work to do among the backlashing whites and rediscovering his own Italianness as the blacks had their blackness, so also Barbara Mikulski her Polishness, and so on. Finally, among the backlashing whites themselves, the new black militancy triggered some obvious counter-rhetoric and we began to hear—and the indefatigable button-makers produced buttons proclaiming—"Italian power" and "Polish power" and that Italian is beautiful, too, and Polish, and Greek, and Czech, all of it beautiful, too.

From all of this has come the assertion often heard, repeated here by Murray Friedman, when he says that "America is going through a period of re-ethnization." Well, we know that a lot is going on, but we do not know for a fact that anything like "re-ethnization" is going on. The word alone should be enough to make anybody hope it isn't so. It is clear enough that a great reordering of identities *is* going on among all kinds of Americans. It is clear that in the great confusions of the time, a certain lunging back into the tribal caves is one way to find, maybe, the emotional security that seems to have disappeared everywhere else. It is a time when new meanings of *American-ness* are being made. It is surely a complicated and profound happening. But we still know very little about it, and we know least of all about how it may or may not be happening among the blue-collar Americans, the so-called "white ethnics."

We do not know how far the ethnic factor, as such, appears in the pattern of disaffection and disarray that now grips so many among them. No evidence about this, certainly, appears in *Overcoming Middle-Class Rage*, and elsewhere we have gotten so far only scattered bits and pieces, occasional articles about the Irish —now the most "in" of the "outs" —or more frequently now about the Italians and some of their new groups, anti-defamation like the Jews, militant like the blacks. But we do not know how marginal these stirrings are or how deep they may go, how they turn up among the generations, how ethnic concerns survive in the old, how far and in what forms they touch the young.

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Now being of Irish or Polish or Italian or whatever origin plainly has great meaning in a person's life. It shapes and will continue to shape much of the style of his being, the way he lives, the way he brings up his children. We all know or should know by now how much of a myth the "melting pot" turned out to be. But we should also be aware of how much did melt: being Irish-American or Italo-American or Polish-American is very different from being Irish, Italian, or Polish. It should also be clear that beyond all the stereotypes and bald assertions lie immensely varied details and versions of these differences, by age, by education, by life experience, by the many different choices people have made in putting their lives together, inside, at the margins of, or beyond the bounds of, their original ethnic or cultural beginnings. We do not know enough about this to call it, of all things, a "re-ethnization of American life." The matter is too crucial and too complex to be covered by anyone's strong or wishful impressions. The subject still awaits its authors.

It is most emphatically a good thing for individual mental health and the national public health that all the old racial/cultural pecking orders of superiority/-inferiority are being ironed out in America and some new pattern of styles of individual self-esteem and mutual respect being shaped to take their place. That this is happening here is what makes America, with all its pollutions, still the last best hope of mankind. But whether here or anywhere, every person needs to have or recover or acquire a self-respecting acceptance of his own origins and be able to maintain, as he wishes, any communal associations, life styles, or religious beliefs or practices that come out of those origins. Being able to do this is, among other things, what being American was always supposed to mean and may now be finally getting to mean. The proponents of this book's "new pluralism" are not at all clear, however, that this is all they do mean. Their "new pluralism" still comes—as perhaps it must—in highly varied and still undefined terms. But some of its interpreters here seem to be reaching for a new institutionalization of the numerous religio-ethnic-tribal differences among Americans. This is quite something else again.

The late David Danzig, citing unarguably the reality and persistence of group existence and group conflict in American life, posed the question this way: "Has America substituted for its goal of a unitary integrated community of individuals, a compartmentalized society of groups?" The question really is, however, whether this substitution has been made not by America but by new enthusiasts for ethnic resurgence, the new ethnic-niks. There is a curious myopia in the way, for example, some of them deal with the place of the "individual" in the professed American model. This comes out very clearly in the way Danzig described Gunnar Myrdal's use of the term "moral dilemma" in dealing with America's failure to live up to the American creed. "In one set of circumstances," wrote Danzig, "we strive to live up to the principle 'regardless of race, color, and creed'; in other circumstances, *race, color,* and *creed* are the very principle by which human relationships are organized. Gunnar Myrdal in my view failed to understand American society when he assumed that this contradictory behavior reflected a moral dilemma. On the contrary, this is the accepted differentiated structure of our social order."

But this view in turn fails to take into account that the American creed promises equality of status to every individual regardless, precisely, of the ethnic differences by which most relationships are actually organized, that is, in all the many forms of inequality imposed by the dominant on the dominated. The whole point was to protect the individual from the effect of these differences, certainly in the domain of his legal and human rights as a citizen of the community at large. It was the failure of American society to make good on this promise—above all to the blacks—that confronted it with the dilemma that was in its deepest sense, moral.

Murray Friedman provides us, perhaps unwittingly, with some idea of just how much we might, by this token, be expected to "accept" in Danzig's "accepted differentiated structure." Friedman writes: "It is important in all this to recognize that no special virtue or culpability accrues to the position of any group in this pluralistic system." At the moment, "the American creed sides with Negroes, Puerto Ricans, American Indians . . . who have been discriminated against for so long. But we should not be surprised when Italians, Poles, Irish, or Jews respond to Negro pressures by rushing to protect vital interests which have frequently been purchased through harsh struggle of their own with the ethnic system." In effect, it is dog eat dog, and anything goes. This reminds me of someone I once knew who thought that the practice of *any* religion was better than practicing *no* religion, and I am sure she would have included the Black Mass and Kali worship, just as Friedman's logic would have to apply to the Klan or the American Nazi party, or for that matter to the Jewish Defense League. "This is not to suggest," Friedman hastens to add, "that the 'American creed' of equal rights . . . is a mere bundle of words." Not at all; what it is, he says, is a prime weapon for *groups* to use in pushing or maintaining their group positions—regardless, of course, of virtue or culpability.

One has to go all the way to page 275 in this book to find, in the article by Irving Levine and Judith Herman, the first sentence that notes that "there is still a need to preserve the total society from fragmenting into disparate and unrelated groups" and a need "for some protection for the individual who does not choose to identify with a particular community but opts for an identification which is more universal." Yet they cite as one end of the pluralist spectrum, and by no means disapprovingly, the position of the American-Indian activist Vine Deloria who, with *his* vision of the Indian tribal nation on its own land, comes out for "the basic sovereignty of the minority group."

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This, the authors suggest, might "seem extreme to some" but it is not all that different in essence, they hasten to say, from current proposals for decentralization of governmental bureaucracies. They go on to cite Glazer-Moynihan, who counterpose the "Southern model" of rigid group lines operating on a "separate but equal" basis to a "Northern model" in which groups operate fluidly in an open society, with individual choice, not law or rigid custom, governing individual behavior. This latter option, say Levine and Herman, is "visionary." Which is quite remarkable, considering that it is precisely the system, with all its defects, in which we operate now. Levine and Herman conclude by saying that "new formulas" are needed. It appears, then, that the "new pluralism" as conceived here requires (1) a new formula for keeping ethnic groups from tearing each other limb from limb as they have done from time immemorial, and (2) a new formula for an American pluralism which will reshape our society into a corporate body of groups with some minor safeguards—remnants of the American creed no doubt—for those benighted few who prefer to remain detribalized.

SOME of the possibilities of this new "formula" as they appear here go back not only to "separate but equal" but all the way to the Ottoman Empire, which left all matters of civil status and communal justice to the separate communities while keeping all essential power in the hands of the regime. This still survives in Israel where the Ottoman formula allows the Orthodox control of all civil status of individuals, leaving no status at all, no chance of legalized birth or marriage or divorce, for anyone who does not hew to the prescribed line. The shadow of this appears among our ethnic enthusiasts, for example, in the proposals now before Congress (the Schweiker and Pucinski bills) for establishing "ethnic heritage studies" in schools with federal funds. Friedman sees these bills as "hopeful signs that we are beginning to come to grips with our tribal past and present." Tribal indeed. The details vary, but the essence of the matter has to do with setting up separate ethnic-studies programs—like the black-studies programs which inspired the whole idea—under the control of the separate ethnic communities to teach young ethnics about their ethnic heritage. Sounds reasonable, doesn't it, just like the black-studies programs? But the same questions hold: Just *who* will represent the "community"? *Who* will decide what is to go into each program? Which Hungarians, for example, will decide what version of contemporary Hungarian history is to be taught to young Hungarian-Americans? And what kind of pressure will this system apply, in the public domain, on the child whose family has other ideas about its own or any other ethnic background? We have already had enough experience in black studies and "community control" to see what innumerable cans of worms are opened up by *this* one!

THE new ethnic-niks—in what must hopefully be seen as a temporary me-too knee-jerk response to the black-studies phenomenon—are apparently ready not only to see us breach the constitutional safeguards for separation of church and state, but to see public tax money spent to support all the hundreds of various groups that would quickly spring to feed from this great new ethnic trough. It is getting to be time for people who believe in the open society to join to fight this kind of thing. In its private domain any religio-ethnic group is free to establish schools and publish literature and propagate any version of its view of life that it wants its young to learn. But not in the public domain. Obviously we do need to correct, revise, and expand all that is taught about American history and American life and expose *all* students to *all* the varieties of ethnic-group experience which have gone into the making of the American society. And this has to be done under public auspices and public control, with an obligation to respect scholarly standards, comparative criteria, and the presence of the endlessly differing versions there are of all this material.

These differing shapes and ideas and practices exist in *every* group, even now not only within the Catholic Church, but within its separate orders and parts. In what must be an irresistible tendency to serve their own convenience, ethnic-niks keep speaking of "groups" as though they had some monolithic character that went beyond the grossest of the characteristics the members do have in common. It has become fashionable to refer also to "Wasps" in this remarkably false and sloppy manner, or to refer, as Friedman does at one point, to "the liberal Wasp Northeast section of the country." Yet surely they must know that there are many more than 57 varieties of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and that all their own "groups" are similarly divided into numerous and sometimes fiercely contending subgroups, and that this contention makes up most of the group's life where it is not confronting those other groups outside the pale. In *Overcoming Middle-Class Rage* nothing illustrates this more aptly or expertly than Milton Himmelfarb's "Jewish Class Conflict?," a 1970 COMMENTARY article in which he examines how New York Jews divided in the matter of re-electing John Lindsay mayor in 1969. His report also graphically illustrates, by the way, not only how deep these intra-group differences can become, but how easily the grossest styles of inter-ethnic conflict are activated, as in the currency of "Italian jokes" among the pro-Lindsay Jewish liberals, no more exempt from the ethnic virus, it seems, than the anti-Semitic militant blacks or Italians.

IT IS in the realm of politics that the ethnic group patterns have been most vivid and even dominant in the American experience, whether in the Scandinavian upper Midwest, or the multi-ethnic Northeast. (The Democratic National Committee puts out a booklet listing some 350 ethnic "days" that every good politician, especially every candidate, must know about.) It is in this realm that much of the current change

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is being reflected, especially the changes forced by the new emergence of the blacks. Using the power of ethnic bloc votes by groups on their way up from the bottom has been one of the main devices of the system, and it may be seen working now in Gary, Cleveland, Newark, Detroit, some Southern counties, and elsewhere. To be sure, this process repeats itself now with grim differences, the special character of the tensions created by the black emergence, the weight of the enormous problems created by inner-city decay. Just how ethnic patterns will rearrange themselves in this new chapter of American political life remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is that the system, with all its terrible limitations and defects, is there to be worked and still offers more outlets than any of the new formulas sought or imagined so far either by the separatist black ultras or their white ethnic counterparts.

Overcoming Middle-Class Rage ends with a section on politics, with excerpts from Kevin Phillips, Spiro Agnew, and Edmund Muskie, a love letter to Mayor Daley from Father Greeley, and an appeal for revival of the old progressive majority by that stalwart of stalwarts, Bayard Rustin. The Muskie contribution is his election-eve speech of November 3, 1970, in which he so effectively besought the country to pull itself together. It is unfortunate that all the political pieces in this book except Rustin's predate the 1970 election. Moreover, the Kevin Phillips excerpt, complete with map of the coming Republican majority, is reproduced with only the barest intimation that the map drawn by Phillips bore little or no resemblance to the map that the electorate drew that day. The American pendulum does swing hard when it swings, but that election showed that it had not swung anywhere near as hard as so many had feared. This does not mean that all the problems addressed in this book are any the less acute. But it does mean that there is time to take the baby out of the bath, something, I fear, that some of these new pluralists need to be reminded to do.

Movies

Peckinpah & Kubrick: Fire & Ice

William S. Pechter

"Of directors to have emerged in the American film during the 1950's, Stanley Kubrick seems to me the most interesting."

A week before I saw *A Clockwork Orange,* I saw *2001: A Space Odyssey* for the second time. I had liked it the first time I saw it, and I liked it now; the experience of seeing it again providing no large revelations but only a reminder of those things which I'd been aware of before. The idea of the film's being a non-narrative work seemed perhaps even less tenable than it had before—the narrative is, to be sure, an attenuated one, broken up by leisurely, non-narrative intervals, but the main action falls firmly into place as a coherent story, and is easily paraphrasable as such, despite the absence of a single protagonist to link the parts. Perhaps it seemed a bit clearer to me than it had before that the character of the work divides roughly at the point of the film's intermission: part one, chiefly a comic capsule history of an incorrigibly banal mankind's technological progress (man discovers weapons, eats at Howard Johnson's, watches wrestling on TV in outer space, and copes with "zero gravity toilets," etc., while computers declare in interviews that they "enjoy working with people"), climaxing, in effect, with the scientists posing for pictures in front of the "intelligent" slab they have discovered like fishermen with their trophy; part two, chiefly the melodrama of machines which have become like men turning against men who have become like machines, climaxing in the astronaut's dismantling of the computer. About what follows, I have my strongest reservations: the "light show" is pedestrian, and the concluding sequence of the astronaut in the Louis XV suite suffers, I think, not from obscurity but rather from an excess of clarity in conveying Arthur C. Clarke's message of man's rebirth through the benign guidance of extraterrestrial intelligence. Yet such fatuity notwithstanding, this final sequence of the film is realized by Kubrick in a succession of images which truly astonish in their surreal strangeness and beauty; and, indeed, with its wit, it is the film's visual beauty (the light show excepted) which seems to me its most secure achievement. For all his intellectual distrust of them, Kubrick does love his machines as aesthetic objects, and no other film I know has dwelled with such obsessive fascination on the painterly and sculptural detail of flashing light-panels and mesmerically sliding doors—or made so oddly lulling a spectacle of them.

Given my liking for *2001,* as well as my much greater admiration for *The Killing* and admiration also for *Paths of Glory* and for things in Kubrick's other films, it seemed to me more than likely that I would want to write about his latest work, and not premature to draft, before seeing it, the first sentence of a review: "Of directors to have emerged in the American film during the 1950's, Stanley Kubrick seems to me the most interesting." I've now seen *A Clockwork Orange,* and have been staring dumbly at that sentence ever since, as if waiting for it to rewrite itself, or at least move protestingly across the page. For, if there is one thing *A Clockwork Orange* is not, it is "interesting"—striking, perhaps; even brilliant, though in a way I find specious and repellent; but not interesting. And if there is another thing the film is not, it is, all the ballyhoo in

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the mass media to the contrary, the embodiment of its maker's "startling vision."

One could, I think, say much the same of Anthony Burgess's thin, anecdotal fantasy of an imminent future from which Kubrick's film has been adapted. Neither *1984* nor *Brave New World* may be a great novel, but the fantasized futures of Orwell and Huxley take root in one's imagination because they connect with the realities of a recognizable present and are extensions of them; their projections are founded in urgent ideas, and usable in one's thinking these ideas through further (thus the observation that Orwell's book has made the actual materialization of what he describes less likely, a consequence one can't imagine ever ascribing to the Burgess). For all the greater closeness of its writing to us in time, *A Clockwork Orange* posits a future (in which a soulless socialist state reconditions its violent criminals into virtuous automatons) whose elements seem both more tangential to our present exigencies and less convincing as an extrapolation from them than do those of the futures of Orwell and Huxley; while the ideas that prop the Burgess novel up consist of little more than a few pages (43 and 96 in the Ballantine reprint edition) of platitudinous conjecture (put, to be sure, in the mouths of characters who can't be identified with the author) on the primacy of selfhood and dubious goodness of those unable to choose evil.

Still, if there is a "vision" in Kubrick's film, it is the novel's, and, even if the novel's vision of the future seems finally less its imaginative moving force than something manufactured to serve the author's distaste for the present, the book has at least what the film does not: a center. This center, in the novel, is the voice of its narrator; not so much the invented slang in which Alex, the teen-age hoodlum, speaks to us, as the cold nihilism with which he perceives his narrow but vivid world. (The language itself, a compound of adapted Russian and sub-Joycean wordplay, can seem mainly an irritating impediment to one's reading at first, though the fact of finding oneself finally proficient in it is really part of the book's amusement.) Some of Alex's narration remains in the film, but, with the loss of its concentration in a sustained, controlling voice, the paucity of the work's narrative invention is rather cruelly exposed, and none of the director's pyrotechnics—the slow and fast motion, hand-held camerawork, distorting lenses, phosphorescent color—will really substitute for it. And they are directorial pyrotechnics rather than directorial technique—which, however brilliant, finally is about something more than this film's anthology of photographic chic. Even before *A Clockwork Orange*, the notion of Kubrick as a technical genius did not really stand scrutiny; there is, I think, some justice in Gilberto Perez-Guillermo's characterization of *2001* as the work of a Stroheim in outer space; yet, if that film's technical triumph seemed to be less a director's than an art director's, there was at least a director's art to be seen both in the film's wit and beauty.

BUT *A Clockwork Orange* only marks the further progress of Stanley Kubrick's art into that of interior decoration; and, with its shapelessness, limp rhythms, clumsy rear-projection (the scene of a joyride in a stolen car), it is not only lame technically (compare it with *Alphaville*, Godard's vision of a proximate future, to see of what the difference between dull literalness and innovative genius in film-making consists), but deficient even in those things in which one might expect a show of Kubrick's characteristic strengths—of wit and originality. (And though Kubrick has never been better than an erratic director of actors, no other film of his from *The Killing* on has placed such weight on a performance as badly misguided as Malcolm McDowell's leering, smirking, swaggering Alex.) Watching an ape (that one knows to be an actor in ape's costume) contemplate a bone and discover its use as a weapon while *Also Sprach Zarathustra* swells on the soundtrack in a section entitled "The Dawn of Man" in *2001* was funny because it ironically mocked its own pomposity; the speeded-up orgy to the accompaniment of the *William Tell* overture in *A Clockwork Orange* is no more than bad varsity-show humor, as is just about all the other slapstick deviation from Burgess—the stage-gay probation officer drinking from a glass containing Alex's mother's false teeth, Alex falling face first into a plate of spaghetti, etc. And the other instances in which the book has been smartened or tarted up seem equally misconceived—Alex being given a pet snake, the feeble "black comedy" of Alex doing a soft-shoe rendition of "Singin' in the Rain" while preparing to rape one of his victims, the transformation of a wretched old woman whom Alex murders into the bitchy proprietress of a "health farm," surrounded by erotic artworks including a huge phallic sculpture with which he bashes her. (There seems to be a streak of puritanical meting out of punishment in this last touch, as in Kubrick's having the teeny-boppers whom Alex lures to his apartment introduced sucking phallic popsicles, as though the assaults on these victims were somehow invited by their impropriety.) Having no great attachment to the novel, I'd be a hypocrite to take the film to task just for departing from the book, if it weren't that all the departures are for the worse. (To be fair to Kubrick, it seems clear that he admires the novel, and Burgess himself has expressed approval of the film of it.) Even the omission of a single word can constitute a betrayal. In the film, Alex, restored by the government for politically expedient reasons to his former brutality, exultantly declares, "I was cured!" as the music blares triumphantly on the soundtrack and gives way to a reprise of "Singin' in the Rain" as performed by Gene Kelly. In the novel, noting the return of his familiar murderous desires, Alex simply remarks, "I was cured all right," in that tone of casual but total contempt which never wavers.

Yet, even had there been no novel with which to compare it and had *A Clockwork Orange*

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been a better film than it is, what would it mean to speak of the "vision" of a director who, only one film before, was soliciting wisdom from the heavens? Even at its best, Kubrick's work seems less the product of a vision than of a temperament, an idiosyncratically misanthropic temperament as capable of finding expression in tandem with the "vision" of Arthur C. Clarke as of Burgess. When the material is as attuned to the temperament as it is in *The Killing*, the result is what, I think, is still Kubrick's best film; *Paths of Glory* may be more skillfully put together, but it suffers from its simplistic demonology and its sentimental ending. But the films that follow are about as uneven in their quality as those of a director who claims serious consideration can be, with frequently little more than their misanthropy and photographic preoccupations to mark them as the work of the same film-maker. Yet what is most distressing about *A Clockwork Orange* is not that it is as sophomoric in its misanthropic humor as *Dr. Strangelove* (which at least had Peter Sellers at his goonish best as the mad doctor), but that the misanthropy has now become merely another aspect of the decor —more chic—to be offered to the photographer; and it is this, and not the misanthropy itself, which makes *A Clockwork Orange* so peculiarly repellent. The "vision" of *A Clockwork Orange* is really quite tame compared with that of a *Yojimbo* or *Viridiana* (which both happen also to be incomparably more funny). But when, in *Viridiana*, we watch a beggars' orgy and attempted rape while the "Hallelujah Chorus" of the *Messiah* is heard, the effect is black but bracing because the feeling behind it has such strength of conviction. When, in *A Clockwork Orange*, we watch the "stylized" and "balletic" sequence (the adjectives are Malcolm McDowell's) of two rival teen-age gangs clashing violently in an abandoned theater while the soundtrack plays the *Thieving Magpie* overture, the effect is repellent not because of an intensity of feeling but just because there is no feeling at all —only the desire to be clever and photogenic.

Even at his best, Kubrick is ice; Sam Peckinpah is fire. Before seeing *Straw Dogs*, I could have described Peckinpah as the most exciting director to have appeared in the American film since the 40's, and his new work only confirms me in that judgment. Like his earlier *The Wild Bunch*, *Straw Dogs* is a violent work, and, like *A Clockwork Orange*, it is about violence. But the violence of *Straw Dogs* isn't "stylized" and "balletic" as it is in the Kubrick film, nor does one stand coolly and antiseptically aloof from it. Rather it closes like a trap around one until, at the end, one finds oneself grabbed by the throat and plunged inescapably into the sweaty, bloody, palpable thick of it.

The protagonist of the film is a young American mathematics professor on a leave to write a book, and recently arrived to spend the time in an English country town where his British wife had once lived with her family. From the start, despite the pastoral surroundings, things are not right, both between the mathematician and his wife, and around them, in the town, where everyone seems to be intensely aware of the stranger's presence among them, and preternaturally informed of his comings and goings. The young men who work at repairing the farmhouse he has rented on the outskirts of the town barely disguise their resentment of him as an affluent outsider and of his wife's having left the town, or their sexual interest in her (with whom one of them once had an affair); and the wife, excluded by her husband's work and attracted to the cruder, more aggressive masculinity of her former lover, encourages the men's attentions. The wife mocks her husband only half-playfully; she had lived in the farmhouse with her family, and, when the husband asks if a certain chair was her father's, she gibes, "Every chair's my daddy's chair"; and she accuses him of attempting to hide, in his work and at this secluded place, from commitment and from the violent turmoil of the country he has left behind. But the town seems to be only a microcosm of that country, and violence or the threat of violence everywhere around them: in the bellicose old man starting fights in the town pub, the man on the street slapping his simpleton brother; even a boy's slamming against the mathematician's parked car seems an expression of scarcely veiled and unfathomable hostility.

That hostility bares its face when the wife's cat is discovered hanged in their closet; put there by one of the workers, the wife insists, "to prove to you they can get into your bedroom." But though his wife prods him to take action against the men, he says nothing, and even agrees, in an act of bravado, to join them in a bird shoot. He does, and while he is duped into waiting for them in the woods, the wife's former lover returns to the farmhouse to rape the wife, who invites him in and finally gives herself to him responsively; then another of the men appears, with his shotgun, and, despite the protest of the unarmed former lover, a much more real and ugly rape ensues. The next day, the mathematician, incensed at his humiliation by the men during the hunting party, fires them, unaware of what has happened to his wife, who tells him nothing but only taunts him for his "cowardice." Then, on the evening of a "church social" at which the town's population congregates, all the strands come together. Niles, the simpleton, leaves with a young girl, the niece of the pub-brawler, who flirts with him after flirting unsuccessfully with the mathematician, and the demented man accidentally kills her. Hunted by the old man and the four workmen, he is struck by the car of the mathematician, who takes him to the farmhouse to which the others soon track him. They demand that Niles be turned over to them, but the mathematician refuses, and the men attempt to force their way inside. The town magistrate appears and tries to restore order, but he is killed by a half-accidental blast from the old man's shotgun. And then all hell breaks loose. When it is over, the house is a shambles, though successfully defended, and the old man and

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four workers have been horrifyingly slaughtered.

THESE are the bare bones of the film's action, but such an account of them gives almost no sense of the undercurrents and tensions which wrack the work: of the subtle malevolence of old men's watchful eyes in the town, the foul cauldron of animosities that boils among the men loitering at the pub, the intricate web of goading and provocation in which everyone finally is entangled. Above all, is the insistent linkage of violence with sex (and of sexual with territorial relations). The wife taunts the husband about his lack of the workmen's kind of masculinity, while provoking them by exposing her breasts at the window; the workmen in the pub tease the old man for being past it sexually, while the old man is tigerishly protective of his sluttish niece in a way that suggests his own fantasies of her ravishment. When the men actually go after the simpleton, they are not even aware that the girl is dead, but they hardly need this further incitement to violence, so soon does the violence that has been seething everywhere establish its own momentum. And suddenly what had seemed to be one thing becomes quite another. The wife, sickened now by the prospect of more violence after her rape, begs her husband to give Niles to the men, but he refuses, and, when one of them asks why he is taking responsibility for Niles, replies not (as might seem most compelling) that the hurt man was struck by his car, but: "This is my house." And one sees that this is, for him, his second chance to confront the men who have humiliated him; his second chance, in effect, to save his cat; and, though he is properly dismayed by his wife's willingness to turn Niles over to their attackers, that is not really what his stand is about at all. "This is where I live. This is me," he says, turning furiously even on his wife when she is reluctant to aid him. "I will not allow violence against this house."

And the terrible irony of this is not just that, unknown to him, violence has already been committed against his house, but that it is nothing compared with the violence which follows. And, further, that, somewhere during the course of that prolonged and horrendous violence, one becomes aware, as one watches him take to his task as though possessed, that he actually *enjoys* what he is doing. "Why don't you entertain Niles?" he says to his wife, winking lasciviously, when she refuses to help him, at one point dragging her by her hair just as one of the rapists had earlier. When the violence subsides, the old man's foot blown off, two others shot full blast, a fourth bludgeoned with a poker and the fifth mangled in a trap, the mathematician rights a fallen chair, and says to himself in incredulous exultation, "Jesus, I got 'em all!" (Though, in fact, it is the wife's ex-lover who has killed one of them, the second rapist, who surprises the wife upstairs, and attempts to rape her again. She calls for help—not her husband's but her lover's name—and so he, too, has his second chance to prove himself heroic in her eyes.) At the end, the mathematician drives Niles back to the town. "I don't know my way home," Niles tells him. "That's OK," his benefactor replies, his face breaking into a sickeningly knowing smile. "I don't either."

Yet even to give this much of an account of the film's features is to leave it at bare bones insofar as one fails also to suggest its film-making mastery and extraordinary beauty. No other American director now working (with the exception of Hitchcock when he feels like it), and perhaps no other who has worked since the advent of sound (with the exception of Capra at his best), edits film with Peckinpah's brilliance and precision, and the climactic section in particular, as ugly in subject matter as a work of art can be, is paradoxically beautiful as well in the command of dynamics and rhythms and the sheer stunning virtuosity with which this passage of film, of images in motion, is pieced together. *Straw Dogs* is like *The Wild Bunch* in its embodiment of this paradox, and surpasses the earlier film, I think, in the way the isolation of the violence by slow motion here magnifies it without any aesthetic softening; for really, of course, Peckinpah's film is no less stylized than Kubrick's—it's just that the style of *Straw Dogs* isn't preening and effete. And *Straw Dogs* is like Peckinpah's other films, too, in the way the actors—here Dustin Hoffman—are both used for what they bring to their roles as types and allowed to develop performances which, at least in Hoffman's case, draw deeper on their individual resources than anything they have done before. But, curiously, the film I am also put in mind of by *Straw Dogs* is *The Birds*—because of Peckinpah's technical mastery, in part, but also by both films' sense of gathering dread, and by the way the characters and spectators of both too late find themselves ensnared. *Straw Dogs* is less spacious and visually dazzling than *The Wild Bunch*; a darker, more brooding work in both mood and visual style; and probably I could say I enjoy it less than I do the earlier film. And the beginning is, I think, really somewhat too looming and deliberate in its oppressive sense of ubiquitous peril. But the later film is finally, if anything, even more complex and amazing in the way it forces one to an agitated confrontation with one's own emotional involvement in the violence it depicts. Nor does Peckinpah evade complicity with the spectator in this;* surely, whatever his conscious attitudes toward the violence of his films, no one can stage scenes of violence with the kind of controlled frenzy Peckinpah brings to them without being susceptible to the frenzy despite his controlling it; without, in some sense, enjoying what he does. And it is this investment of himself and attempted exorcism of his devils in his work, perhaps even more than his film-making genius, that makes Peckinpah at once so hard to take and so impossible to turn away from. Kubrick coldly lectures us that we are living in a hell of our own making. Peckinpah writhes in the flames with us, burning.

* It is perhaps relevant to note here the source of the film's title in Lao-tse: "Heaven and earth are ruthless, and treat the myriad creatures as straw dogs. The sage is ruthless, and treats the people as straw dogs."

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The Molecular Drama

CHANCE AND NECESSITY: AN ESSAY ON THE NATURAL PHILOSOPHY OF MODERN BIOLOGY. By JACQUES MONOD. Translated by Austryn Wainhouse. *Knopf. 224 pp. $6.95.*

Reviewed by R. J. HERRNSTEIN

JACQUES MONOD, director of the Pasteur Institute in Paris and winner (with two colleagues, André Lwoff and Francois Jacob) of the Nobel prize for physiology in 1965, calls our attention to the genius of *Escherichia coli.* Place just one of these bacteria (whose native turf is the bowels of certain animals, including man) in a dish with a little water, a few grains of sugar and a dash of mineral salts, and within thirty-six hours, the broth will be teeming with several billion, virtually identical germs. Little wonder that the facts of life have long strained our capacity to accept a physical explanation. How in the world does a creature weighing less than one trillionth of a gram outperform—in precision, economy, and speed—the best that man's science of chemistry can deliver? Yet the job gets done, Monod points out, within the constraints imposed by the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which is to say, that the physical-energy changes in the dish conform to ordinary physical principles even as the germs reduplicate themselves into myriads of separate, living existences.

Monod's book, based on lectures given at Pomona College early in 1969, recounts modern molecular biology's story about *Escherichia coli,* and therefore also about the chemical basis of life in general. For, as he says, "To biologists of my generation fell the discovery of the virtual identity of cellular chemistry throughout the entire biosphere." Clearly a momentous discovery, the chemical unity of life also vastly simplified the task of molecular biology. Now the job called not for a separate account of each living form, but instead merely for the rules by which a single fundamental procedure ramified itself into the phenomenal diversity of creatures. The new task may not be exactly easy, but it could have been (as far as anyone knew thirty years ago) immeasurably harder.

The fertile bacterium poses a dual riddle, says Monod. First, whence the *invariance,* the capacity to duplicate itself virtually down to the molecular level—at least, most of the time? Inanimate objects do not often (if ever) reveal a comparable flair for self-duplication, so when we marvel at life's distinctiveness or uniqueness, we must be reacting partly to its invariance. The second half of the riddle, Monod calls *teleonomy,* the goal-directedness of living beings. In the growth and development of its physical structure, as well as in its behavior, the living organism reveals an inner determination, setting it to some degree free of its immediate circumstances. Each creature develops and performs true to its type, acting and growing so as to sustain itself in its distinctiveness. The environment does not just act upon animate objects, as it does upon inanimate ones like falling stones or cooling cups of coffee, but is acted upon by the creature, for its own purposes. This is not to suggest that Monod believes in a mental life of germs, nor that he is unaware of the physical limits in the environment outside of which any given creature ceases to function typically or at all. Instead, it shows that Monod recognizes the magnitude of the task of reconciling the purposiveness of life with the mechanisms of science.

At least, that reconciliation is what Monod seeks. He scorns easy solutions, which replace ignorance by mere postulation. The vitalists, like Bergson, endow living creatures with *élan,* a spiritual essence that fortuitously provides just those properties of teleonomy thought to be lacking in the physical body. And the animists, like Teilhard de Chardin, expunge the riddle of teleonomy by professing belief in the unfolding of a universal principle, unknowable by definition. The old struggle between mechanists and anti-mechanists (the vitalists and animists) pervades the book as Monod works through his solution of the dual riddle. The progress of molecular biology since the early 1950's has closed much of the credibility gap that earlier afflicted mechanistic biology. No longer must the mechanist feebly defend himself with discoveries yet unmade when challenged by the extraordinary precision of biochemistry, its subtle adaptations, or its ability to reproduce itself. Now he can array the chemical code laid down in the genes, along with glimmerings of how it is deciphered into the richer language of amino acids, which concatenate into the thousands of proteins found in all living creatures. By no means has all of the tale been told, but enough bits and pieces so that the anti-mechanist now begins to suffer lack of credibility.

Here and there, molecular biologists have traced through a series of chemical reactions at the microscopic level to show teleonomy in fact, not just in principle. There are, for example, chains of chemi-

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cal reactions that manufacture "metabolites"—essential chemical components in some structure or process. The speed of the reactions (hence their net productivity per unit of time) gets paced by highly specific chemical agents called catalysts and regulators. (Catalysts, some may remember from their chemistry courses, enter into reactions and speed them up without being consumed or even permanently altered by them.) If, as is sometimes the case, the final outcome of a chain is, at one and the same time, both a metabolite *and* a regulatory inhibitor for some earlier reaction in the chain, then chemistry has created a self-limiting production line. As the level of metabolite rises, it more and more retards further production. When the level falls, production rises. It is obvious that such negative feedback may sometimes serve a useful purpose. There are other configurations serving other purposes—to retard or advance particular chemical outcomes under particular circumstances so as to promote the vigorous survival of the organism.

THIS new victory for scientific materialism has shown how Darwinian selection reaches down into the molecular substratum of life. "Survival of the fittest"—so graphic a portrayal of the pre-nuptial contests of bull moose or the gradual stretching of the giraffe's neck —may now be applied with equal, if not greater, validity to the molecular drama. The key to understanding has been the discovery of what Monod calls the "gratuity" of the chemical substratum of life. Because catalysts are tied to certain reactions rather than others by the match of arbitrary spatial features in the component molecules—much like a key in a lock—the opportunities for chemical innovation are as boundless as the endless spatial variations of organic compounds. The catalytic nature of life's essential chemistry allows regulation to vary relatively freely (by mutation, accident, etc. —the "chance" in the title of the book) without altering the basic chemistry of the system as a whole. If a particular variation is advantageous, it may, through natural selection, establish itself in future generations (by "necessity," as it follows from the simple arithmetic of Darwinian evolution). The advantageous variation must, of course, originate in the genes in order to be heritable, but Monod shows how the genetic "alphabet" may sometimes turn up with a beneficent misprint. The occasional "errors" are sifted over automatically for the rare, fruitful variation, giving the living system at once both its *invariance* and *teleonomy*. Chance and necessity combine to favor the right innovation at the right time.

In the short span of a couple of decades, molecular biology has taken great strides toward deep and significant understanding. It has also added to the vernacular a number of pseudo-words and quasi-phrases—like "DNA" and "RNA" and "polypeptides" and "nucleotides" and "stereochemical complementarity"—incomprehensible to anyone whose last chemistry course is of earlier vintage than about 1955. Part of Monod's purpose in his lectures must have been simply pedagogic—to attach to those mysterious new labels some concrete meaning for the layman. But that likely was his lesser purpose, for the major themes sound more philosophical than pedagogic. He could actually have made his main points without any chemistry at all, setting the question instead as follows: "Grant me a true science (i.e., like physics or chemistry) of life's invariance and teleonomy, substantiating once and for all the principles of evolution by natural selection. What broader lessons shall we learn then?" For Monod, of course, the substantive facts of his science have been woven integrally into the fabric of the *Weltanschauung* he offers. Yet a reader who fails to hang on through the elementary biochemistry early in the book can clamber back on to the train of thought later on.

STAR player and articulate popularizer of one of the best games around, Monod should not be too harshly rebuked for his book's shortcomings. But shortcomings there are, at least two serious ones. When he steps back from molecular biology to take a look at science as a whole, he cannot impart his vision either clearly or persuasively. It will do no reader any good to be told that science seeks "objectivity," or that it calls for the "confrontation of logic and experience." The tough problem —to translate those vague and formless guides to action into something concrete and specific—remains unsolved. Was there something especially "objective" about the choice of *Escherichia coli* as the experimental subject? Doubtless, it was a happy choice, but not any more objective or logical than the many organisms that might have served less well. And, to look at science's past, was the phlogiston theory of combustion not an elegant confrontation of logic with experience? Monod fails to see the pragmatic core of science, promoting *Escherichia coli* and rejecting phlogiston by the sole criterion of success. It is an ironic oversight, for the pragmatic standard seems little different in science and in the chemistry of life. In both cases, we see by hindsight how the happy accident (of thought or chemistry) gains ascendancy through natural selection (in predictive power or physiological superiority). Many philosophers, past and present, have come up empty-handed in better style than Monod, when reaching for science's elusive essence.

But the purely philosophical shortcoming seems, at least to me, the lesser one. When Monod considers the role of a creature's behavior, he loses the main story in his enthusiasm for a minor subplot. Behavior, he correctly notes, orients the direction of evolution. When some primitive fish first started venturing on land, it was no doubt ill-equipped to do so. However, its tenacious efforts (and those of its descendants) set the scene in which any mutation favoring terrestrial life quickly (relatively speaking) overspread the gene pool in subsequent generations. In the evolutionist's jargon, terrestrial behavior creates "selection pressure" for terrestrially-adaptive structure. The same argument, Monod notes, applies to all kinds of advantageous behavior. In human beings, the higher

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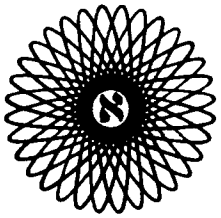
mental functions—language, subjective simulation (his term for cognition), the formation of society and culture—presumably exert selection pressure for compatible underlying structures. The universality of language and certain cultural forms suggests to Monod that even those highly conventionalized human activities have innate underpinnings.

Monod thus takes his place in the vanguard of the swing back toward nativistic theories of human behavior. For a couple of generations after World War I, at least in the United States, the pendulum swung almost friction-free toward the environmentalist pole. John B. Watson's book *Behaviorism* (1924) was heralded in a review in the New York *Times* as the beginning of a new epoch, with its argument that each man's character and behavior was simply a lifetime's worth of conditioned reflexes. Although the psychological substance has actually been much refined, the mass-culture rendition of B. F. Skinner's recent *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* sounds much the same, in content and as portent. Yet in the interval between Watson and Skinner, the simpleminded environmentalism of elementary textbooks and popular magazines has taken a beating, in the laboratory and in philosophical analysis. Behavior is not infinitely malleable; people are not equally talented or motivated or psychically sound. Moreover, some of the limitations, predispositions, and differences are surely genetic. And so, with the customary lag, the pendulum is swinging back, receiving a fair impetus from Monod. It is easy to imagine his message blending with Robert Ardrey's, Noam Chomsky's, Konrad Lorenz's, Desmond Morris's, and with all the others that now stand for *nature* as opposed to *nurture* in the account of man.

While Monod is doubtless right about the contribution of behavior to selection pressure, he fails to uncover a crucial precondition. Consider again the primitive fish flinging itself awkwardly upon the land. A bulging appendage or two to stabilize its thrashings would be



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Psalms 119,126

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very helpful, *but only if the fish has the wits to use them.* What good would it do the fish to have its new appendages without any inkling of how to use them? It may, to be sure, inherit just the right behavior to go along with each new structural modification. But not only is such dual mutation vastly less probable, it tacitly rules out the impact of behavior on selection pressure. New behavior must, at least sometimes, arise within an individual's lifetime, guided by the individual's own successes or failures, in order to influence the course of evolution. There needs to be a provision for fruitful non-genetic and individual variation, in addition to genetic variation, if Monod's hypothesis is to work. For only then, with behavior exploiting the opportunity, will selection pressure follow in the wake of individual variation. Similarly, picture the proto-man whose proto-larynx first fashioned coherent gruntings. Selection pressure for language presupposes that our ancestor had some capacity to press his advantage within his own lifetime, otherwise the potential for language would have languished unused.

To play the major role in phylogeny that Monod accords it, behavior must be responsive in ontogeny. But saying that behavior is ontogenetically responsive acknowledges a substantial part of the environmentalist canon. The more familiar name for the study of ontogenetic responsiveness is "learning theory," the branch of psychology devoted to how creatures get their behavior changed by their experience. Monod, having missed the environmentalist ingredient in his scheme, fails to note that the study of the learning process has not lagged far behind molecular biology in recent years. For Watson, all learning was a version of Pavlovian conditioning. Skinner and most contemporary environmentalists know that Pavlovian conditioning is not enough. Not very much complex behavior is cast in the mold of a dog salivating at the sound of the dinner bell. In addition, behavior often echoes its past in accordance with a process known as "operant" or "instrumental" conditioning. The

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laboratory rat hungrily pressing a lever for a bit of food exemplifies such learning. Even in human beings, behavior of all degrees of complexity can be shaped by this process, which accounts for much of the current excitement over "teaching machines" and "behavior therapy." The essential principle could hardly be simpler—out of the stream of movement, certain movements are selected for repetition, if they lead to particular outcomes (like food for a hungry rat or a successful putt for a golfer). The clear parallel between this kind of learning and phylogenetic selection has been noted often in the hundred-odd years since Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin. In both mechanisms, adaptive, teleonomic outcomes arise from purely automatic rules for selection.

ENVIRONMENTALISTS, impressed by the power with which surroundings mold behavior, implore us to make the most of the plasticity. Nativists, recognizing the tie between behavior and physiology, caution us against too bland a disregard of biology. Both, of course, are right, and, often, wrong, when carried away by excesses of enthusiasm. Monod, in the grip of nativism, fails to tie together the strands of his argument, depriving it of a solidity it could have had. He acknowledges the role of behavior in creating selection pressure. And he is hardly unconscious of the learning process in some contexts, for, when discussing mankind, he notes that ontogenetic adaptation substitutes to some degree for biological evolution, making adjustments possible within single lifetimes. But he misses the impact of ontogenetic adaptation on evolution itself, for once creatures acquired the capacity to learn, their behavior became the cutting edge of phylogeny as never before, creating selection pressure wherever a new behavior conferred some advantage over one's kind. Had he spotted the parallel yet interacting mechanisms of selection in behavior and in the germ-plasm, he would have seen ontogeny and phylogeny playing off one another in endless spirals of chance and necessity.

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Historian's Progress

AMERICA AT 1750: A SOCIAL PORTRAIT. By RICHARD HOFSTADTER. *Knopf. 293 pp. $6.95.*

Reviewed by
DAVID HERBERT DONALD

IN May 1969 Richard Hofstadter sent his publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, the prospectus for a three-volume comprehensive history of the United States, extending from 1750 to the present. He estimated that this ambitious undertaking would run to 1,500,000 words and might occupy him for the next eighteen years. Eighteen months later he died of leukemia at the age of fifty-four. He had completed only eight chapters of what would have formed the introductory section of the first volume of his trilogy. Now published as *America at 1750: A Social Portrait,* these essays offer both a brilliant interpretation of Colonial society on the eve of the Revolution and a fascinating glimpse into the mind of one of the most gifted and influential of American historians.

Like Hofstadter's previous books, *America at 1750* is analytical rather than narrative history. Willing in theory to concede that "the narrative is . . . the shank of history," Hofstadter was never much interested in story-telling. In private a superb raconteur and mimic, he avoided in his writings the colorful anecdote, the vivid description. His mind was that of the essayist, rather than that of the novelist, and all his books, beginning with *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1945), are collections of discrete chapters dealing with the same theme rather than connected narratives. In *America at 1750,* following an introductory discussion of population and immigration, three chapters examine white and black servitude in the colonies, three others treat religion in the New World, and one comprehensive chapter analyzes "The Middle-Class World."

Hofstadter's books are, however, not just collections of essays; in each he advanced a major new thesis about American history. Perhaps his most influential and widely read work was *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (1948), which stressed the shared convictions, the "unity of cultural and political tradition, upon which American civilization has stood." *The Age of Reform* (1955), which won the Pulitzer prize in history, suggested that both Populism and Progressivism could best be understood as products of psychological, rather than economic, discontent on the part of farmers and Middle Americans. Hofstadter's second Pulitzer prize-winning book, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963), traced as a dominant theme in American thought "resentment and suspicion of the life of the mind and of those who are considered to represent it."

Similarly, *America at 1750* is a book with a thesis. Hofstadter argues that by the middle of the 18th century "England and America had become quite different societies, the first still the sphere of a worldly aristocracy and a worldly establishment, the second a center of ascetic Protestantism and middle-class morality." To explain American distinctiveness, he showed how migration brought to these shores "a skewed sample of the European populations," plus an enormous number of Africans; he argued that, though wealth and poverty existed in America, middle-class values dominated in Colonial society; and he described how the religious revivals of the Great Awakening made the colonists aware of "their common religious culture and common concerns," which were increasingly distinguishable from those of Europe.

This interpretation, sure to be debated by experts on early American history, is of interest here chiefly because of what it shows about Hofstadter's habits of mind. It is not a thesis which could be proved or disproved by the research Hofstadter did. Any claim of American distinctiveness can only be supported by a systematic comparison of American and European society, which Hofstadter did not attempt. But Hofstadter was never much interested in proving his theses. The biographical sketches in *The American Political Tradition,* for example, were not written so as to argue for "the common climate of American opinion," which Hofstadter in his introduction announced as his main theme. Actually, as he told me, that much-quoted introduction was drafted almost as an afterthought, at the request of the publisher, so as to give unity to his series of brilliant but loosely related biographical vignettes.

In short, Hofstadter was more concerned with illustrating than with demonstrating his arguments. He announced that he would be satisfied if his work were taken "as a prelude and a spur to further studies," rather than as "a final judgment." In consequence he never had much concern for historical methodology—the procedures by which a scholar attempts to test and verify his findings—and he was altogether untouched by the growing vogue among historians of quantitative methods. To be sure, he was broadly tolerant of what he called "positivistic history-writing"—though, as he wrote me, he was rather more willing to trust such experiments when produced by historians who had previously demonstrated mastery of the traditional forms of research and writing.

At the same time, Hofstadter himself was anything but a traditional historian, narrowly limited to his own discipline. Few other American scholars have ranged so broadly through the literature of the social sciences, and he had special competence in sociology and social psychology as well as in history. "I have found," he wrote, "that my interest and gratification in my own discipline have been enormously intensified by what I have been able to take for it from other disciplines." Yet, proud of his own craft, he deliberately spoke of the historian as "having contacts with the social sciences rather than as being a social scientist." He doubted that historians had

DAVID HERBERT DONALD *is director of the Institute of Southern History at Johns Hopkins and a former longtime colleague of the late Richard Hofstadter.*

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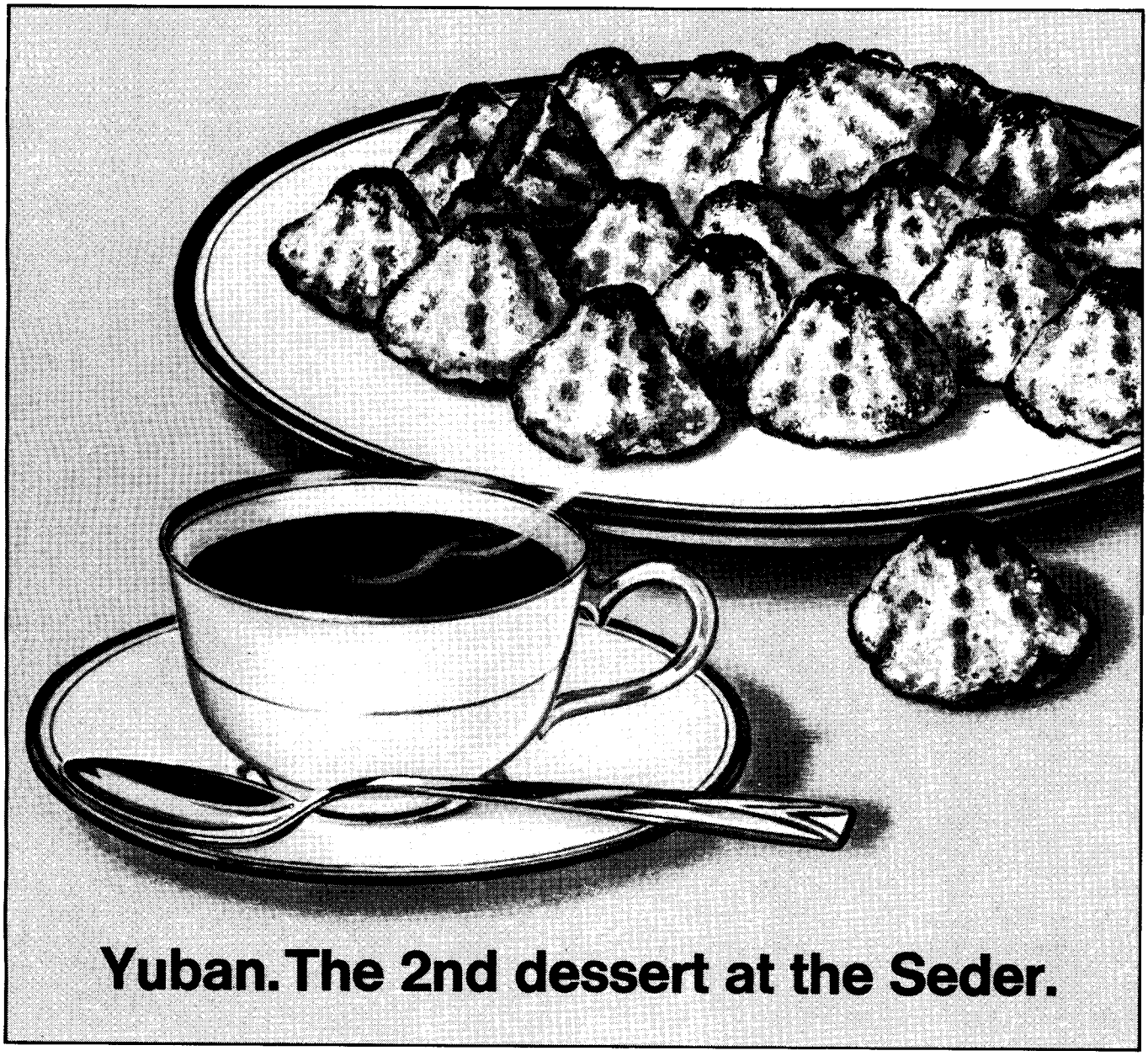

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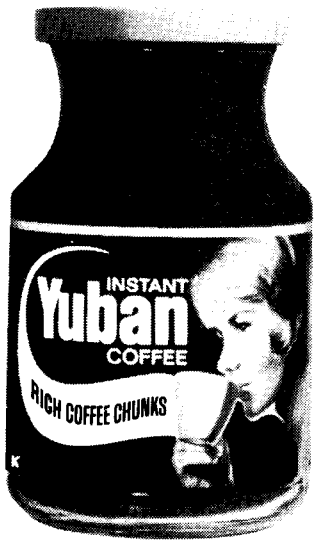

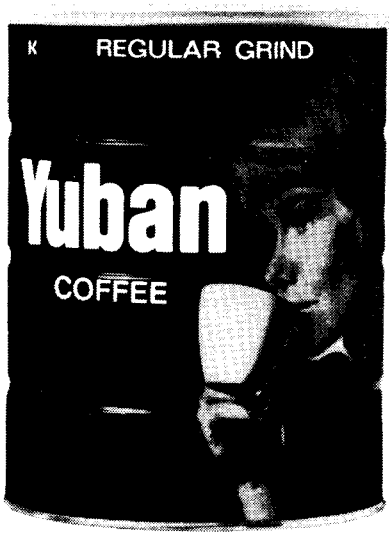

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much to gain by adopting the elaborate and often technical methods of sociology and economics, but he thought they had much to learn from such cognate disciplines because they often explored new topics, "problems which the historian has usually ignored."

HOFSTADTER'S pivotal position in American historical scholarship derives from the fact that he himself examined just such new problems. Originally interested in American political history and in the history of ideas, he discovered that the area of his deepest concern "lay between the two fields, at the intersection of their perimeters," and that he wanted to "write about . . . things marginal to both political historians and to practitioners of the history of ideas." He did not want to undertake "a study of our high culture, but of the kinds of thinking that impinged most directly upon the ordinary politically conscious citizen." Consequently his investigations led him into subjects professional historians had hitherto considered unworthy of serious study. It would be hard to think of a major scholar before Hofstadter who deigned to examine the mind of "Coin" Harvey or the literary-scientific fantasies of Ignatius Donnelly.

If Hofstadter was motivated in part by a kind of collector's relish for American zanies and bigots, he also had a very serious purpose in exploring these darker crevasses of the American mind. Most of his books sought to recreate the past in order to reappraise the present. Like all great historians, he was a serious, and sometimes a devastating, social critic. In *The American Political Tradition* he presented a mordant portrait of our leading politicians, no one of whom lived up to Hofstadter's exacting criteria for statesmanship except Wendell Phillips—the only one who never held office. *The Age of Reform* subjected the Populist-Progressive tradition, in which Hofstadter himself had been reared and in which his political sentiments were formed, to equally severe criticism. Even the titles of *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* and *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* show Hofstadter's intent to expose the shoddy and the pretentious aspects of our culture.

Because Hofstadter often stressed the values shared by most Americans, some younger scholars, many of whom were in diapers when he began to write, have seriously misunderstood his work, and they have identified him with the so-called consensus school of historians, whose other key figures are Louis Hartz and Daniel J. Boorstin. The linkage was one which Hofstadter himself rejected, and he took pains to distinguish his own unique position and to point out the limits of consensus historiography. When he outlined the common ground upon which Federalists and Jeffersonians, Whigs and Jacksonians, Republicans and Democrats stood, it was not in order to rejoice that America had been spared meaningful political conflict, much less to exalt mindlessness as an admirable and distinctively American outlook; his purpose was to show that our "fiercely individualistic and capitalistic" shared beliefs were outmoded in an age that demanded "international responsibility, cohesion, centralization, and planning."

During the late 1960's Hofstadter grew increasingly uncertain about the historian's role as a social critic. There was less and less need for him to expose the weaknesses of our system when the United States government was daily demonstrating its incompetence at home and its irresponsibility abroad. Moreover, as a liberal who criticized the liberal tradition from within, he was appalled by the growing radical, and even revolutionary, sentiment that he sensed among his colleagues and his students. He could never share their simplistic, moralistic approach to social problems of enormous complexity, any more than he could be attracted by their "coarser rallying cries of politics." In one of his best but most neglected books, *The Progressive Historians* (1968), he exhibited how a want of scholarly detachment undermined the historical work of Frederick Jackson Turner, Charles A. Beard, and Vernon L. Parrington. When the radical student movement shook the foundations of his beloved Columbia University, he had still further reason to reconsider the social responsibilities of the historian.

I SUSPECT that Hofstadter began his projected trilogy in order to work out his new, though not yet completely articulated, view of the historian's social role. He was developing a profoundly humanistic, deeply tragic, conception of history. One function of history "as practiced by mature minds," he suggested, is to require us to recognize "the structural complexity of our society in the past" and also "the moral complexity of social action"; the other is constantly to remind us "of defeat and failure," of "the sadness that is natural to life." These two ideas are the dominant themes in *America at 1750*, and they make it at once the most subtle and the most pessimistic of Hofstadter's books. For him the American experience was not a success story but an experiment of doubtful value and of questionable outcome. Carefully sketching the complacent world of the middle-class colonists, he clearly sympathized with the enormous portion of the population that never attained that comfortable status. Reminding us that over half the white inhabitants came to the New World as indentured servants, redemptioners, and convicts, he described the perils of the ocean voyage as these social rejects of Europe "lay in their narrow bedsteads listening to the wash of the rank bilge water below them, sometimes racked with fever or lying in their own vomit." Then, bleakly, he interrupted his narrative: "Few could have expected very much from American life, and those who did were too often disappointed." Yet Hofstadter recognized that the experience of these white settlers was almost idyllic when compared to that of the blacks, who tasted the full "anguish of the early American experience."

From such origins he planned to trace the emergence of the United States as "the first post-feudal nation, the first nation in the world to be formed and to grow from its earliest days under

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the influence of Protestantism, nationalism, and modern capitalistic enterprise." When George Bancroft used much the same language to describe his own monumental history, he thought he was enumerating the solid virtues which had caused the United States to flourish; Hofstadter was pointing as well to the serious weaknesses that flawed the Republic from the start. He might have taken as the theme for his work T. S. Eliot's line: "In my beginning is my end."

TV & Politics

THE NEWS TWISTERS. By EDITH EFRON. *Nash. 336 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID ERNEST HAIGHT

EARLY in October of last year a little-known publisher in Los Angeles released a book which, by the normal standards of American publishing, had only a modest future. Not only was the publisher little known, so was the author: Edith Efron, a staff writer for *TV Guide*. Miss Efron's prose was nothing more than competent. The book itself carried a tendentious title, and a pugnacious blurb on the jacket. Most other forms of advertising, moreover, were nonexistent. By all odds, *The News Twisters* should have been ignored by most book-review editors and have passed rapidly into the bins of those booksellers who specialize in disposing of overstocks.

In New York, the center of the publishing and communications industry, it began exactly that way. Not one of the important reviewing publications—the New York *Times, Time, Newsweek, Saturday Review*—chose to consider it. The morning and evening talk shows of the television networks ignored it. But in the rest of the country something peculiar happened. Several major newspapers, including the *Christian Science Monitor*, the Chicago *Sun-Times*, and the Washington *Post*, gave it major reviews. The opinions ranged from good to dreadful, but even when they were bad, *The News Twisters* was treated as important. In St. Louis, for example, the *Post-Dispatch* gave it both straight news coverage and the backhanded compliment of an editorial attack. In Boston, the *Globe* covered it on the front page. By the end of November it had been praised by a half-dozen syndicated columnists (none of them, curiously, based in New York) and violently attacked by one (Harriet Van Horne of the New York *Post*). In its December 13 issue *Time* listed it, without comment and still without review, as the Number 10 non-fiction best-seller in the United States.

Outside of New York City, *The News Twisters* had somehow become a publishing phenomenon like *Unsafe at Any Speed* and *How to Avoid Probate,* one of those occasional volumes in which a previously unknown author manages to touch a public nerve the rest of the industry scarcely knew existed. Books with this impact us-

DAVID ERNEST HAIGHT, *a new contributor, is an associate professor of political science at Hunter College.*

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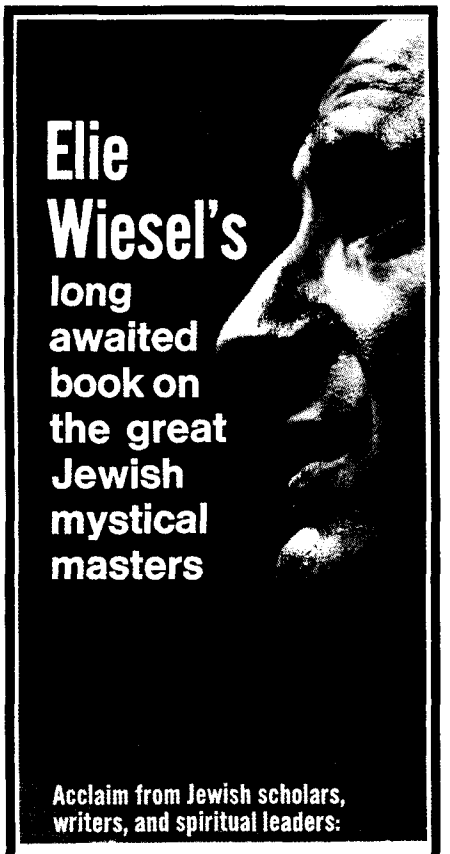

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ually have a certain quality in common: a brief and pungent message that means something to nearly everyone. *The News Twisters* fits the pattern. Its subject is TV and politics—specifically, network TV coverage of the 1968 Presidential election campaign—and its message is simple and straightforward: the networks are biased.

Miss Efron studied the early evening news programs of all three networks during the final seven weeks of the campaign, examining the coverage given (a) to each of the candidates, and (b) to "a set of 10 related issues: the U.S. policy on the Vietnam war; the U.S. policy on the bombing halt; the Viet Cong; black militants; the white middle class; liberals; conservatives; the left; demonstrators; and violent radicals." Among her conclusions are these: all three networks actively slanted their coverage to oppose the administration's Vietnam policy in general and its bombing policy in particular. All three networks actively slanted their coverage "in favor of the black militants and against the white middle-class majority." And all three actively favored Hubert Humphrey and opposed Richard Nixon. From these specific conclusions she draws a more general one: ". . . it is clear that network coverage tends to be strongly biased in favor of the Democratic-liberal-left axis of opinion, and strongly biased against the Republican-conservative-right axis of opinion."

Similar charges have of course been made before, and some of the critics have been far more prominent than Miss Efron (the Vice President of the United States, for one). For the most part their criticisms have been ignored or successfully dismissed by the networks. But in two respects Miss Efron's accusations are different from those that have appeared before. First, previous critics have been clearly partisan, applying partisan standards to the coverage given their favorite topics. Despite the obvious conservatism of her personal preferences (and it *is* obvious that in many ways she is an Ayn Rand, free-enterprise, capital-C Conservative), Miss Efron has managed to avoid this posture. Instead, in a stroke of rhetorical genius, she has invoked a clearly nonpartisan criterion for network bias: the "Fairness Doctrine" of the Federal Communications Commission.

The Fairness Doctrine was established by the FCC in 1949, replacing an earlier policy which had outlawed any partisan commentary by broadcasters altogether. In it the Commission encouraged the presentation of controversial public issues on the air—provided that approximately equal coverage was given to each side of each issue.* The doctrine does not require that every broadcast, or even a series of broadcasts in the same time-slot, be balanced (a point which Miss Efron mentions but then tends to forget). It is sufficient if the "overall" coverage is balanced. Nevertheless, the principle is intuitively appealing: nonpartisanship requires balanced coverage; somehow that is common sense.

It is the second distinction—and another brilliant stroke—of Miss Efron's book that she takes this principle literally. Fair coverage requires equal coverage? Very well, she says, let us measure. Using three tape recorders, a typist, and a grant from something called the Historical Research Foundation (which seems to be, at least in part, a subsidiary of that well-known conservative conglomerate, William F. Buckley, Jr.), Miss Efron transcribed, classified, and *counted* the words each network devoted to the topics she was studying. She classified the words into *pro-* and *anti-*, and calculated the ratio between them. The results of this process, a primitive version of the professional social-scientist's technique of content analysis, are what gives her book its impact. They are devastating. If her figures are to be believed, the evening news programs of all three networks broadcast, during the period of her study, 2,125 words in favor of an American bombing

* The Fairness Doctrine should not be confused with the "equal time" requirement imposed by Congress on those broadcasters who carry political speeches. That requirement is a law; the doctrine is a policy of the FCC which could be revised by the FCC.

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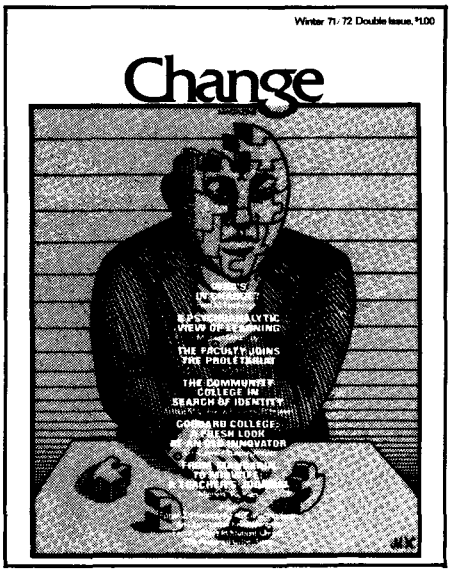

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halt in North Vietnam, and only 348 words against. Her figures show 7,296 words in favor of black militants and 3,271 against. And they show that while coverage of Hubert Humphrey was almost equally balanced at 8,458 words *pro-* and 8,307 words *anti-*, coverage of Richard Nixon was 1,620 words *pro-* and *17,027* words *anti-*, an incredible anti-Nixon ratio of over 10 to 1.*

The figures for her other topics are, for the most part, equally striking. But it is her method that deserves the most attention. If it is as impartially accurate as she claims, then she has provided for the first time solid and incontrovertible proof of something which both conservatives and radical leftists have alleged for years: Establishment liberals have captured one of the most important parts of the mass media and are using it for partisan propaganda.

NOT surprisingly, Miss Efron's method has its critics. Chief among them is CBS, which celebrated the publication date of *The News Twisters* with a highly critical 18-page press release based on an advance copy of the book. Several of the arguments in the release quickly appeared in reviews by presumably independent critics. There is also Professor Charles Winick of the City University of New York, a sociologist and specialist in content analysis who was engaged by CBS to examine the professionalism of Miss Efron's techniques and who issued a report which found them wanting. The arguments of this group of critics are various, but the most important can be summarized under two headings: Representativeness and Accuracy.

Under the first heading, it is said, first, that the last weeks of a Presidential campaign are probably not representative of year-round news coverage; second, that the evening news may not be representative of the networks' total newscasts; and third, that the issues examined by Miss Efron may not be representative of all the topics covered on the evening news and in any case do not describe the overall pattern of coverage. These points are easily dealt with: they are mainly true and mainly trivial. True, a Presidential campaign is not representative: instead, it is unusually important. The same can be said for the evening news programs; as the networks themselves are fond of pointing out, they are the single most important source of news for more than half of the interested public. As for the topics chosen: it is obvious they are a conservative choice; there is "the Left" but not "the Right," "violent radicals" but not "repressive society." Nevertheless, most of them (the candidates, Vietnam policies, racial images) are significant by anyone's standards. If, therefore, her results cannot justify the charge that the networks violated the Fairness Doctrine, neither can they be dismissed on this account. She studied something important.

The question of accuracy is more serious. Essentially, her critics charge that Miss Efron misclassified many of the items she transcribed, labeling as bias passages which are merely impartial reporting. *Classification*—or *coding*, as professionals call it—is the heart of any content analysis. In academic studies it is normal to establish written standards for coding in every study, and it is common to use a panel of three or more judges who independently examine any crucial or difficult-to-code material. Miss Efron did neither. "Network news," she says, "is an extremely nonintellectual commodity, and the opinion which it relays tends to be simple, short, highly partisan, and crudely 'for' and 'against.' It is readily isolated."

Following this conviction, she apparently coded every item herself. The results do not always justify her belief in the simplicity of the process; CBS has pointed out persuasive examples of cases in which her conservative attitudes obviously led her to see liberal innuendo in innocent material. Invariably, however, these errors are

* Here and in the other places where I refer to "the networks," I have added up the figures which Miss Efron has presented on a network-by-network basis.

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in her coding of reporters' comments, and not of interviews, excerpts from speeches, and so forth. Network news contains a large proportion of such direct quotations from partisan sources, and coding *them* is simple. A child could identify the bias in Eugene McCarthy's comments on Richard Nixon or U Thant's view of America's Vietnam policies; establishing a panel to do so is like establishing a panel to determine whether the speakers are male or female. When such material is separated from reporters' comments—and Miss Efron does separate it, in one of her chapters and in one of her numerous appendices—the pattern remains evident in nearly every topic.

Examining solely material from people other than reporters, we find that the three networks together broadcast 5,095 words favorable to black militants and 2,881 words against during Miss Efron's seven-week period. They broadcast 2,956 words critical of U.S. Vietnam policy and 700 words favorable; 1,385 words favoring a bombing halt, 348 words against. If one examines the coverage of Nixon and Humphrey, it seems that deleting reporters' comments leaves the *pro-* and *anti-*Humphrey material essentially even, or a shade against him on CBS and NBC; the material on Nixon varies from a ratio of 5.5:1 against him on ABC to 6.8:1 against him on NBC and 9.0:1 against him on CBS.

Neither the networks nor reviewers have commented on this aspect of the book. Unless they can show that Miss Efron simply added wrongly, it is hard to see how they *could* comment. Sloppy methodology or not, she is on to something.

INTERPRETING what she is on to is at least as interesting as examining how she found it. Miss Efron herself offers two explanations, covering average reporters and then the more perceptive ones. The first group, she thinks, simply mimic the selection procedures and the presentation of those they admire. She quotes Theodore White: "The moral heights of New York are held by journals like the *Village Voice* and the *New York Review*

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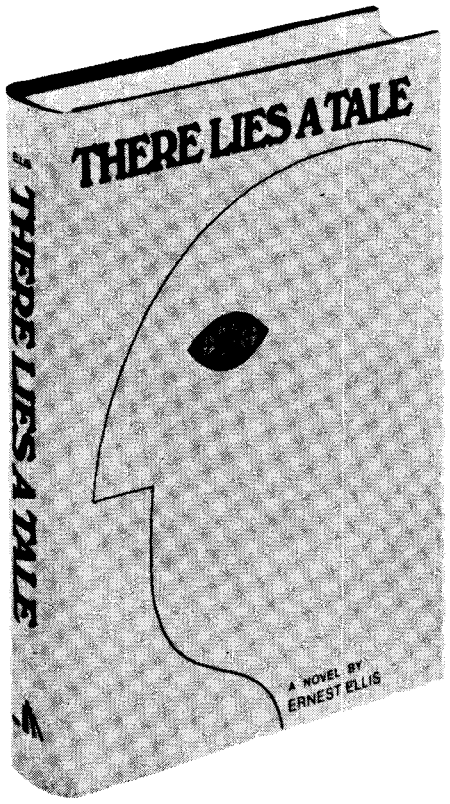

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of Books. They are so pure, and shriek with such passion, that, in fashionable New York, they are the pulpit-voice of The Church of Good Liberals." But behind the pulpit, so to speak, she sees a group of self-conscious liberal-Establishment newsmen who are perfectly aware of what they are doing. She sees no conspiracy, it should be noted, rather "a tacit determination by a ruling intellectual elite to hold onto a position of influence in which it is now entrenched."

Her solutions are straightforward: *political labeling, spectrum commentary,* and *spectrum hiring.* The process by which this is to be accomplished, however, she does not discuss. So long as the networks insist that they are merely reporting the news, not editorializing on it, they will have to be enticed or compelled to institute a wider spectrum of labeled commentary as a supplement to their present programs. It is hard to see how they can be so enticed (editorials sell little advertising), and the prospect of compulsion leads to a bureaucratic and judicial swamp. The Supreme Court might approve, in principle, such a requirement; in 1969 the Court ruled 8-0 that "to condition the granting and renewal of licenses on a willingness to present representative community views on controversial issues is consistent with the ends and purposes of those constitutional provisions forbidding the abridgement of freedom of speech and freedom of the press." But the practical problems of deciding when and how well the requirement had been met could drive both the Court and the FCC to distraction.

It seems more likely that the solution to editorializing in the news (whether liberal, conservative, or otherwise) lies in technology rather than revision of the Fairness Doctrine. The recent agreement worked out by the administration for the expansion of cable-TV in the country's 100 largest cities will eventually make it possible to provide viewers with the same variety magazine and newspaper readers enjoy now. Cable-TV can offer dozens of programs simultaneously. In such a situation, those who find the *Evening News with Walter Cronkite* unpalatable might just as easily have it *with William Buckley.* And who knows, in such a situation Edith Efron might even get reviewed in New York City.

Rags to Riches

THE AMERICAN IDEA OF SUCCESS. By RICHARD M. HUBER. *McGraw-Hill. 563 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by JOHN P. SISK

IT IS hard now to imagine a time when this book would not have been timely, convinced as we are that to understand America one must first understand the American idea of success. It is doubtful, however, that very many of the millions who were nurtured on McGuffey's "Eclectic Readers" in the last century would have found such a study relevant to their needs. They would have been too busy reading the hugely available success literature in an effort to actualize the idea in their own lives. The really timely writers like Russell Conwell, whose "Acres of Diamonds" lecture was delivered over six thousand times and earned its author several million dollars, or Elbert Hubbard, whose "A Message to Garcia" had a distribution of forty million copies, assumed that the American idea of success was already sufficiently clear and needed only to be publicized. The price of such timeliness, of course, is that virtually nobody reads them now. They deserve a better fate, if for no other reason than that they can help us understand the most timely thing about Mr. Huber's book: its awareness of the dilemmas that result when we reject categorically the values Conwell and Hubbard accepted unquestioningly.

In its broadest outline *The American Idea of Success* is concerned with the working out in time of the American character ethic. Hence we return once more to the world of Cotton Mather and Benjamin Franklin and the early efforts to articulate and put into

JOHN P. SISK *teaches English at Gonzaga University in Spokane.*

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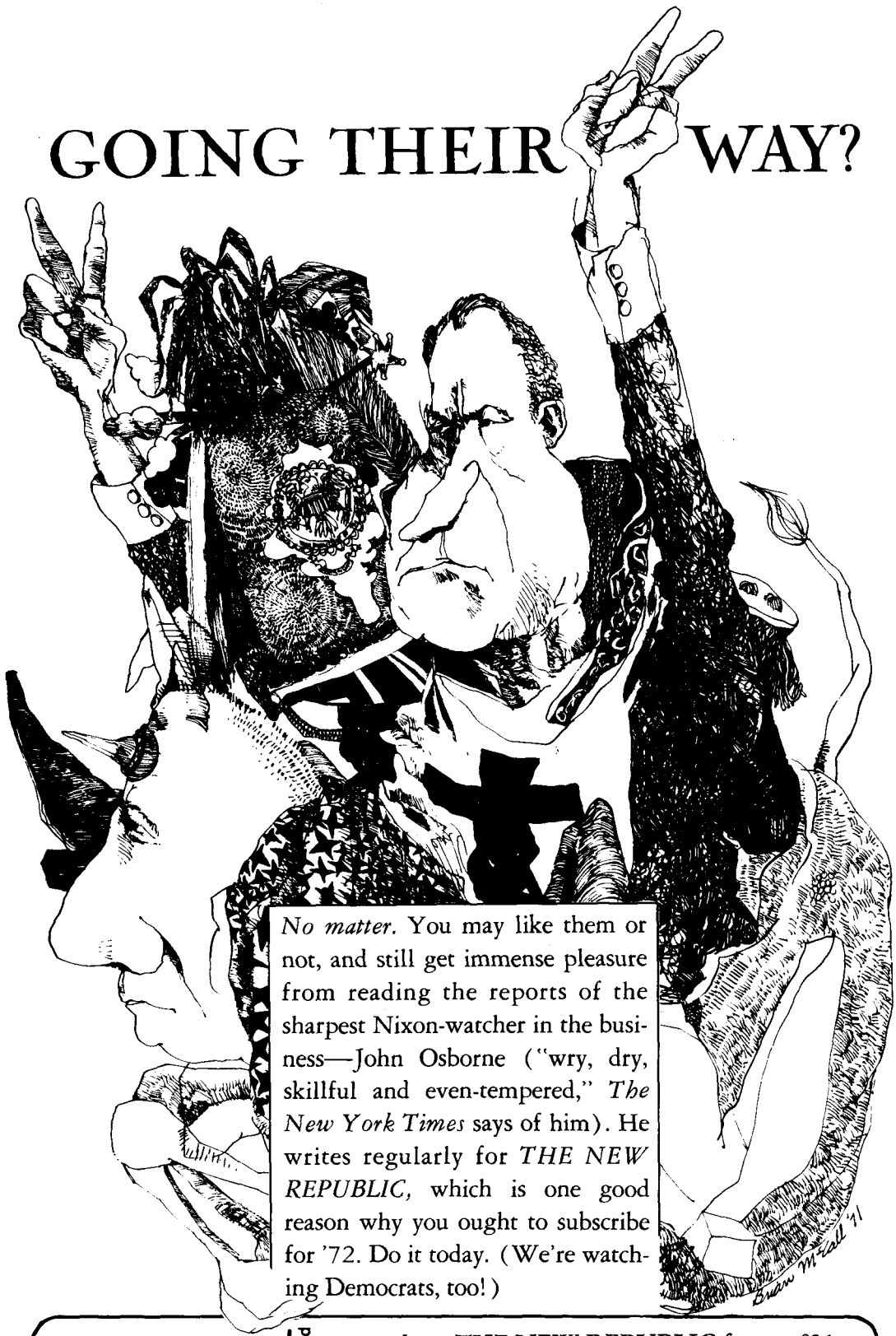

No matter. You may like them or not, and still get immense pleasure from reading the reports of the sharpest Nixon-watcher in the business—John Osborne ("wry, dry, skillful and even-tempered," *The New York Times* says of him). He writes regularly for *THE NEW REPUBLIC,* which is one good reason why you ought to subscribe for '72. Do it today. (We're watching Democrats, too!)

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practice a formula for success that for a long time looked foolproof but which in the end proved to be seriously flawed. Part of the problem was that, given the material potential of America, the formula worked only too well: it tended to create what we have gotten in the habit of calling an economy of abundance in which the impulse-inhibiting, ascetic, God-fearing hero of the character ethic was less and less likely to appear.

The hero of the character ethic strikes us as a lonely individualist walking a tightrope. But he was assisted by certain balance-inducing convictions about the moral goodness of an unremitting commitment to work, the stewardship of wealth, the automatic social contribution of a purely personal triumph, the absolute desirability of character however it paid off, and the ultimate superiority of "true success." True success meant a life devoted to the service of others and the full development of one's capacities along traditional Christian and humane lines irrespective of material gain. Mr. Huber, who is very good on this subject, refuses to write it off as a hypocritical smoke screen, although in effect it was frequently enough that. The American gospel of success existed in tension with the other-worldly orientation of Christianity and the special kind of this-worldliness that true success represented. Success writers therefore "tried to hold this tension in healthy balance by sanctioning money-making, but only if it did not become the sole end in life and if the money was put to good purposes once it was made." This was theory, of course, but even in the Gilded Age, Mr. Huber claims, it was a far more important determinant of action than Social Darwinism. As a theoretical justification the latter was much more likely to appeal to an intellectual like William Graham Sumner than to the struggling capitalist, who "had to justify his life in moral and humanitarian terms."

The character ethic tried to keep tension at a manageable level by emphasizing not the speed but the inevitability with which success resulted from honest hard work. In proportion as the emphasis shifted from inevitability to speed we are in the domain of the personality ethic, which after tentative beginnings early in the 20th century, achieved its Koran in 1936 with Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. After this point the character ethic was never the same, although Horatio Alger continues to be remembered in an annual award and public figures periodically regret that the young no longer read him.

THE personality ethic triumphed over a character ethic already weakened by the mind-power ethic of the New Thought Movement which late in the 19th century gathered together and adapted to local need strands of thought deriving from American transcendentalism, English romanticism, German idealism, Oriental mysticism, and the auto-suggestive psychology of Emile Coué. Its general direction is suggested by the titles of two of its most influential sacred books: Ralph Waldo Trine's *In Tune with the Infinite* and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*. It was an optimistic religious pragmatism that stressed "affirmation, attraction, and the right mental attitude to achieve the heart's desire" and offered "a view of life which guaranteed sick people health, poor people riches, and troubled people happiness." At one time or another it interested personalities as different as William James, Queen Victoria, and Henry Ford, and one of its manifestations, the scientology of science-fiction writer Ron Hubbard, is a basic ingredient in the mulligan stew of magic upon which the public is currently feeding.

It is interesting to note the changing attitudes toward poverty as character ethic gives way to mind-power ethic and personality ethic. For the mind-power ethic poverty tends to be a mental disease, fortunately quite curable, while for the personality ethic it

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is an unqualified evil to be put behind one as quickly and permanently as possible. But for the character ethic initial privation is the indispensable beginning point and school for success (only the deserving poor, of course, can benefit from the education). Quick success is inauthentic success since it is neither character-forming nor character-earned. With the grand example of Franklin ever before them, character ethic writers were nearly unanimous in their agreement that inherited wealth was a handicap almost as severe as being denied a good mother or a rural beginning. When in his essay, "Wealth," Andrew Carnegie urged the rich to leave their sons "moderate allowances, indeed, if any" and approved the increasingly heavy estate taxes he startled his fellow millionaires, but he was simply being consistent with the ethic he had proved out on his own pulses.

It is much the same with the attitude toward money. Those who spoke for the mind-power and personality ethics were not much concerned with the dangers of having too much money or getting it too quickly. But the publicists of the character ethic were never in doubt: to aim only at money was un-Christian and de-humanizing. They would have agreed with the pragmatist Charles S. Pierce that the proper defining opposite for the Gospel of Greed was the Gospel of Christ but they would not have agreed with his use of this distinction to attack their tradition. They would have agreed with Sherwood Anderson's observation, made after the failure of his own effort to succeed in business, that it is foolish to think of the American as a dollar-lover. And they would have understood the end of Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast:* "But this is how Paris was in the early days when we were very poor and very happy."

"Biographical anecdotes," writes Mr. Huber, "are the guts of most success books." This is to be expected; the most educational and inspirational form of how-to-do-it is the story of the man who did it. His own book is most interesting when he uses the biographical method. It is hard to do otherwise, given the extent to which the history of the idea of success is the history of the success writers who wrote about it. Besides, success writers like Wilbur F. Crafts, Elbert Hubbard, Russell Conwell, Lyman Abbot, J. C. Forbes, and Bruce Barton could speak with authority because they had first practiced successfully what they preached.

The danger, of course, is that the hero will be trapped within the story and take its aesthetically necessary happy ending as a historic rather than a fictive promise. Perhaps this is one reason why success writers had to make so much of true success: as if they knew that something had to be redeemable when the story broke up on history. The mind-power and personality ethics, on the other hand, tend to argue that conflict is itself the enemy, to be disposed of by magical techniques. Thus their stories are so disproportionately devoted to happy ending that they are really anti-story. Could this be why the accounts of Peale's and Carnegie's rise to success in the tradition of the character ethic are interesting while their own books are dull?

Mr. Huber's long book, in any event, is not dull, though it lags toward the end when it runs out of biographical anecdotes. If it has less to say than one might wish about the proliferations of mind-power ethic in recent years, it nevertheless provides excellent background for one's own observations. Fortunately, it has little of the kind of put-down humor this subject invites. It is well-organized and it is encyclopedic: it has a sixteen page index and eighty-six pages of references and bibliography. Here everyone will miss something (why, for instance, no reference to the fiction of Cameron Hawley, Ayn Rand, and Sloan Wilson, no mention of Barry Goldwater and so little reference to the voluminous literature of the political Right, most of which is vigorously on the side of the character ethic?). Nevertheless, this section alone may justify the cost of the book to the non-specialist student of American civilization.

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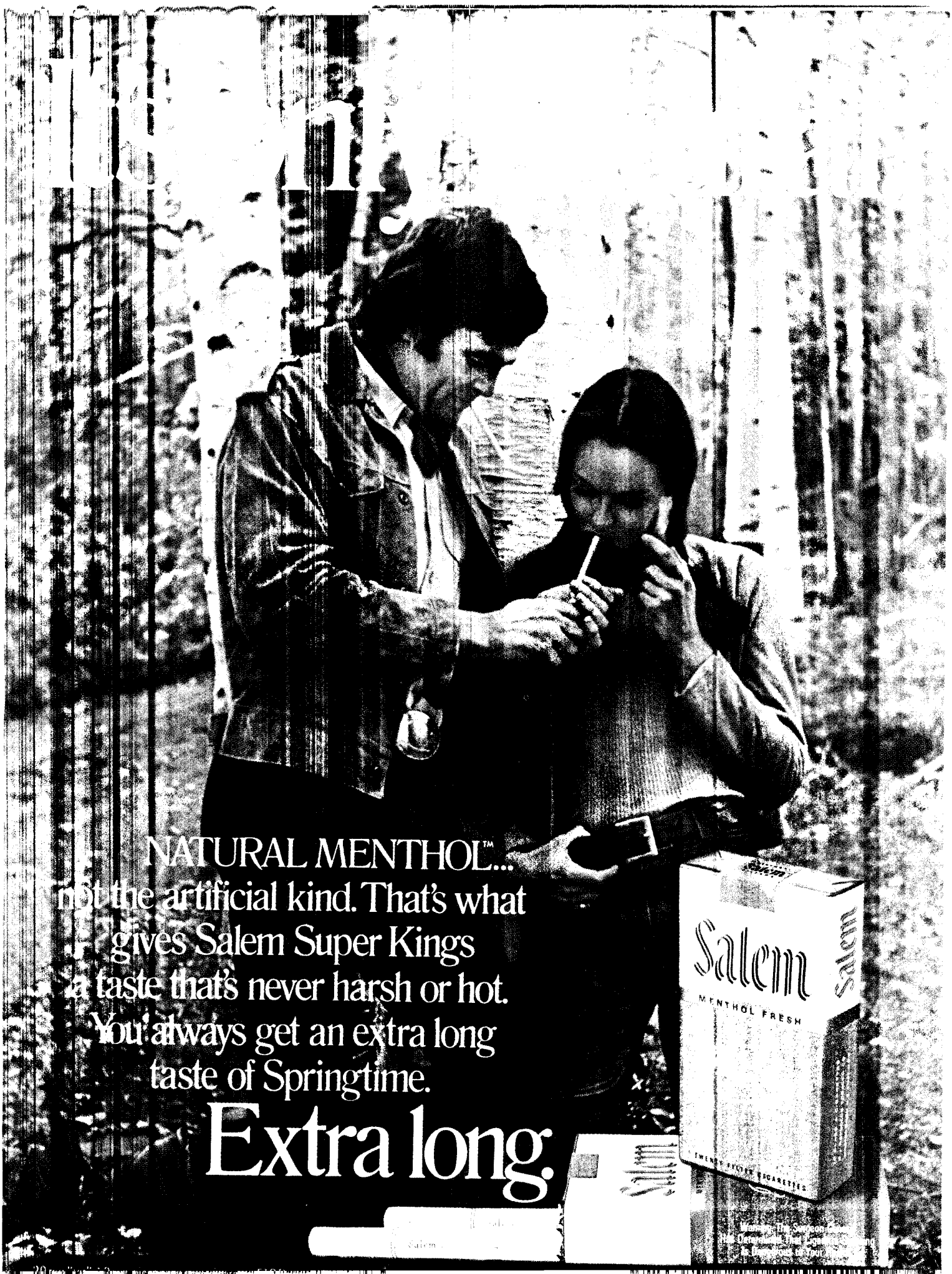

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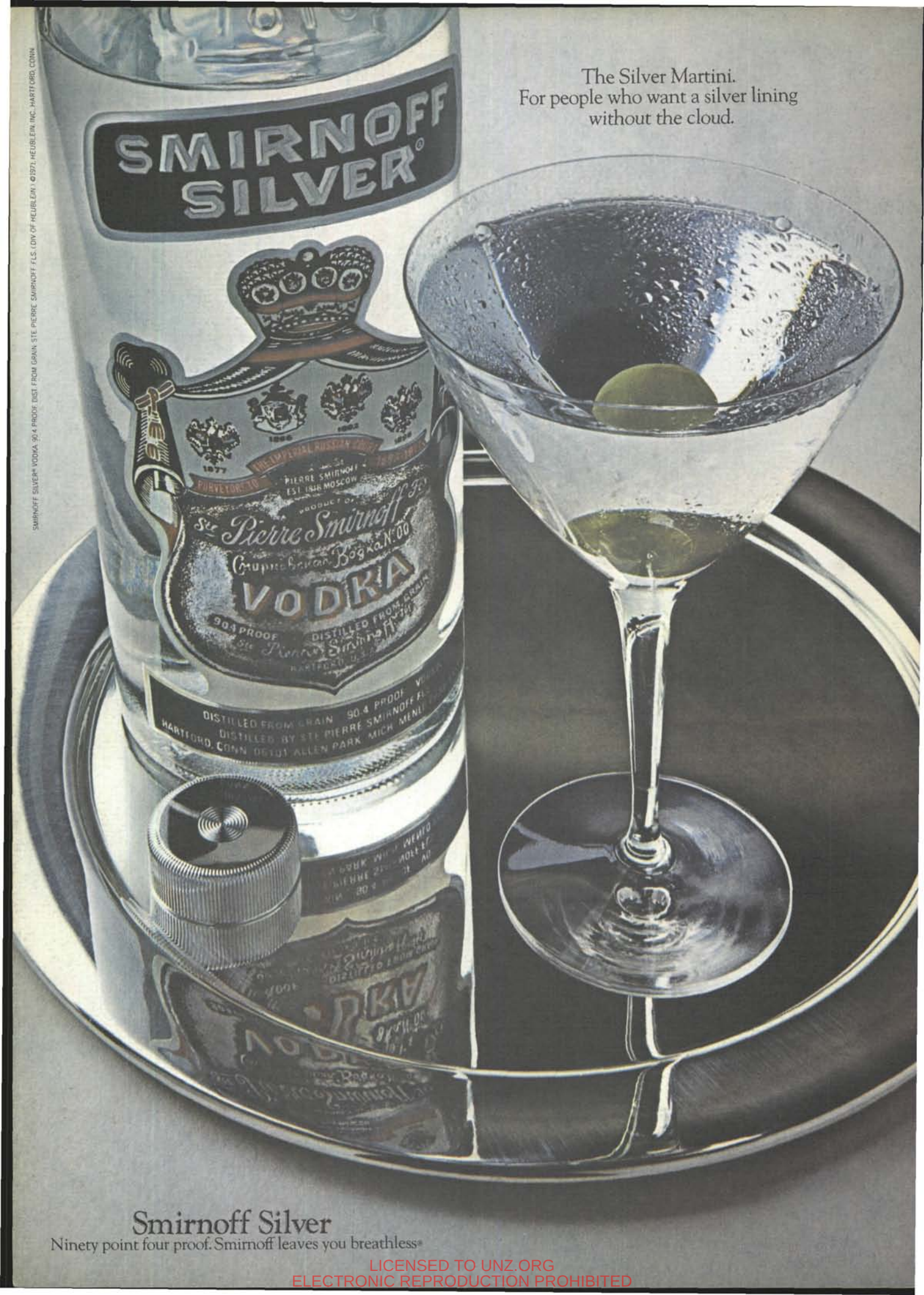

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